Meet Me at the Track
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Meet Me at the Track

by dancermk

Summary

THIS FIC IS NOW COMPLETE - HOPE YOU ENJOY!!

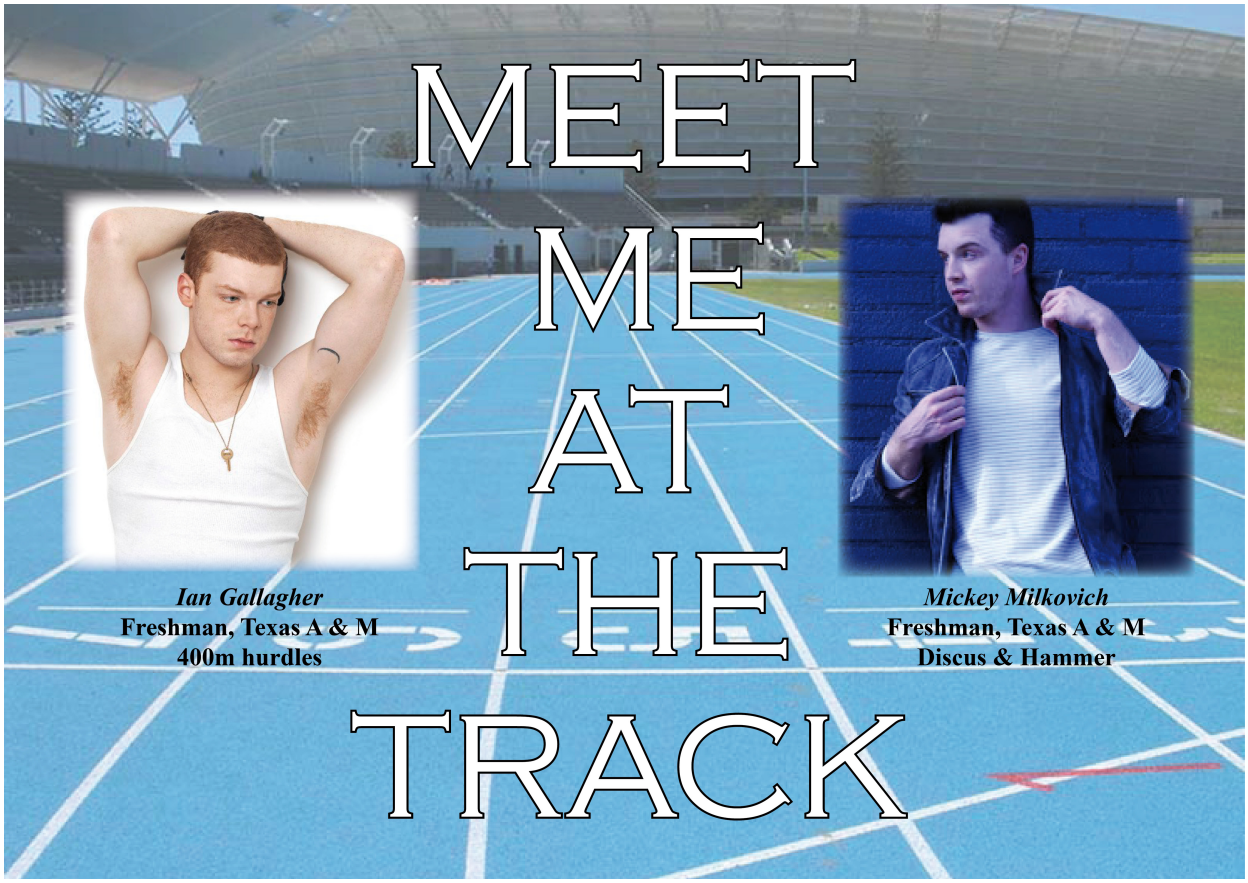
Mickey is on a athletic scholarship at Texas A&M and finally away from Terry - free to do as he pleases. Training at the track one Sunday afternoon, he spots a sexy red-haired hurdler who is distracting as all fuck!

EXTRACT:
Now that Mickey was away from Chicago he was feeling different, starting to relax and starting to want 'something.' He wasn't sure what that something was, but so far Gallagher seemed to tick all the boxes. Mickey loved the fiery red hair, the freckles, and that smile made him feel like a fucking girl. And don't get him started on the six pack, the long legs, and the way he glided over those hurdles.

Notes

For the purpose of this fic both Ian and Mickey are the same age - 19 and it's 2016.
I hope you enjoy it! Thank you for reading!!

Maybe?



Mickey was a track and field thrower. He competed in both discus and hammer for Texas A & M, and he was on a full scholarship. To say he was fucking proud of himself was an understatement. He was finally out of Southside, so fuck you very much Terry. Living on campus was better than he expected, even his roommate wasn't a complete douche. So far it had been the best six months of his life.

From where he was standing in the discus cage, he had a perfect view of Ian Gallagher. Gallagher was a 400m hurdler and a fucking good one. There was a lot of hype about the redhead, and everyone expected him to win World Juniors this year. Mickey, however, was more hyped about getting Gallagher out of those compression tights he wore. Fuck, that dude had to be packing. Those tights left nothing to the imagination, and Mickey's imagination was running overtime. He bit down hard on his bottom lip and suppressed a moan when Gallagher bent over to stretch.

All the athletes knew each other to some extent, but they had their groups—the throwers, the hurdlers, the sprinters, the jumpers—and they stuck to themselves. They had separate coaches and training schedules and only mixed at competitions. So far Mickey had been a complete pussy, making zero attempt to attract Gallagher's attention. Let's say Mickey wasn't hiding his sexuality, but he wasn't flaunting it either. Ian on the other hand was making his way through every queer on campus. Every fag wanted to lock his ass down, but so far no one had succeeded.

Mickey had never had a relationship before. Instead, he was a nineteen-year-old with half a dozen sexual partners—half were girls he banged for appearances, two were random hook ups and one a

semi regular fuck buddy. A couple of the girls had tried to kiss him, but it revolted him, and if he was being honest, kissing dudes seemed fucking dangerous. So he'd kept it simple; quick fucks—get in and get out.

Now that he was away from Chicago he was feeling different, starting to relax and starting to want 'something.' He wasn't sure what that something was, but so far Gallagher seemed to tick all the boxes. Mickey loved the fiery red hair, the freckles, and that smile made him feel like a fucking girl. And don't get him started on the six pack, the long legs, and the way he glided over those hurdles. Did he mention Gallagher's dick? Would he be a fucking perve if he made his way to the showers at the same time? He wanted to see it, touch it, and taste it.

Mickey sat his ass down and took a stretch while his semi went down. Gallagher was doing his hurdle drills on the track about 80 feet away. It was Sunday, and they were both pulling extra training sessions on their own. A couple of sprinters were on the front straight and a long jumper was in one of the pits–it *was* the perfect time to make a move.

*****

Ian was stressed out of his fucking mind. He only had two months before Nationals—which he had to win—then two months after that he would be at World Juniors. Everyone expected him to bring the gold home for the U.S and the pressure was getting to him. He had been training since he was ten years old, and was constantly placing higher expectations upon himself. Since arriving at college six months ago, parties and an abundance of available cock—or perhaps he should say ass - had distracted him. It was imperative that he reined it in and focussed on his goals or he would fuck it all up when it mattered most.

Picking up his water bottle, he took a few mouthfuls. The temperature was unbearably hot, he was sweating, and he didn't feel like doing his 'starts.' Looking around the track, he noticed a few other dumb fucks wasting their Sunday on an extra training session; a couple of sprinters, a long jumper and a thrower.

He'd met the thrower a couple of times; Mickey was his name. The guy was hot as fuck with his muscular, bulky physique and piercing blue eyes. Most of the throwers were a little on the large side for his tastes, but Mickey was perfect. The guy's pouty lips were fucking distracting. Ian was almost 100% certain that Mickey was straight. He was almost 100% certain every queer on campus had already hit on him, and Mickey had not. Ian knew he sounded like an arrogant prick, but he also knew it was his celebrity status that got him all the dick he wanted; talent and success was the ultimate aphrodisiac.

Ian pulled his shirt off and threw it on top of his sports bag, then tipped the contents of the water bottle over his head to cool off.

*****

Mickey was walking back towards the cage after retrieving his discusses when Gallagher pulled his shirt off and upended the water bottle over his head. Holy fuck! The dude shook his head as the water dripped down his torso—over his nipples then rippled down those wash board abs. Mickey stopped and looked. Ian's tights were sitting low, a prominent V exposed.

"Hey! It's Mickey, right?" Ian yelled out at him.

Shit. Fuck. Shit. Fuck.

"Yeah man, you're Gallagher?" he replied, trying to act cool when his entire body was on fucking

fire. Was he blushing? What the fuck! Move asshole, he told himself. Ian was walking towards him, so he took a few steps to meet him at the edge of the throwing cage.

"Glad I'm not the only dumbass out here training on a Sunday. You just do discus or one of the other throws as well?" Ian asked, leaning up against the fence like a GQ model. Mickey was trying his fucking best to keep his eyes on Gallagher's face, but he could see some water droplets making their way down his chest and he wanted to follow them with his tongue.

"I do hammer as well, but I prefer discus. What about you? You ever do the sprint hurdles?"

Mickey knew Gallagher didn't do sprint hurdles, but he didn't want to let on he'd read up on every detail of the dude's life.

"Nah, I did when I was younger, but I just didn't have the speed. Switched to 400 hurdles at sixteen and was National Champion six months later," Ian replied.

Mickey felt like Gallagher was looking at his mouth, but surely that was just wishful thinking, right?

"Best I've ever done was third at Nationals. But it got me a full ride here, so I'm not fuckin' complaining," he said, feeling somewhat inadequate.

"Shit Mick, that's nothing to fucking scoff at. You look pretty good to me. I couldn't throw that twenty feet."

Mickey laughed, "Wanna have a go?" he challenged, raising his eyebrows.

"What so you can laugh your ass off at how weak I am?" Ian said, smiling at him and making his stomach flutter. "Tell you what," Ian continued, "I'll have a go at discus if you have a go at hurdling."

"Fuck off, Gallagher. I'll break my neck - I'm only five foot seven."

"I'll put 'em down a few notches for ya," Ian said, winking at him then taking the discus out of his hand and walking into the cage. Mickey followed behind, wondering if Ian winked at all the boys. Probably.

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Ian could have sworn Mickey was looking at his body. Plus, the guy blushed. Or was he just red faced from training in the heat? Jesus fucking Christ, he needed to get his shit together—he needed to focus on his training and here he was trying to flirt with a straight guy. Now he was going to embarrass the shit out of himself by trying to throw a discus, something he hadn't done since he was a kid.

"Ok Mick, how do I hold it?" he asked, as he turned to face Mickey.

Mickey reached out and started adjusting his hand and finger placement, while he explained what to do. Ian was not listening. The gentle way Mickey was touching him seemed to be in direct contrast to the general manner of the man. Mickey looked like he would be rough and aggressive.

"Hey, Raggedy Ann, you even listening?" Mickey asked, staring straight at him.

"Yeah, yeah, of course."

“Well, as I was saying, your giant fuckin’ hands should come in useful - allows you to get a good grip.”

Mickey was smirking at him with this mischievous look in his eyes and poking his tongue against his cheek.

“I like to get a good grip,” he said, not taking his eyes off Mickey. It was a gamble, he knew. But it was out of his mouth before he could stop it.

Mickey looked away but bit his bottom lip. Ian felt confused, had he misjudged Mickey? Maybe he was a closet case? Undoubtedly a top. Ian fancied topping a fellow top, the thought turned him on.

“Well, let’s see what you got tough guy,” Mickey said, moving away so he could throw.

Ian took a deep breath and took the stance ready to throw, then stopped. “You know I’m not doing that spinning thing, don’t you?”

“Whatever Gallagher, just do the junior athlete throw.”

Mickey was laughing at him now. Cheeky motherfucker. He wouldn’t be laughing when he had to jump over a hurdle. He tried to concentrate, pulling back once…twice…then letting it go. The throw wasn’t as bad as he thought—it wasn’t a ‘no throw’ and the distance was ok.

“Not bad, Gallagher. Looks like those big hands come in handy. You just need to get more twist in the upper body. Here, let me show you.”

Mickey brought him another discus, and he positioned it in his hand just how Mickey had taught him, then took his stance. Mickey moved in behind him - like right behind him—and started directing his arms and torso while he explained what to do. Ian didn’t take in a fucking thing, caught up in the other man’s touch. Was Mickey pressing his pelvis into his ass? Before he knew it Mickey was stepping away and telling him to throw. A fucking miracle occurred, and he threw it further.

“Nice form—lookin’ good Gallagher,” Mickey said, tongue darting out of his mouth.

Was this guy fucking with him? Should he just go for it? He smiled suggestively at Mickey, letting his eyes fall down to his cock and back up. “Looks like you’ve got the magic touch, Mick.”

“Maybe I do,” Mickey chuckled and started packing up his stuff.

“Hey, you’re not going anywhere. You’ve got to get your ass over a hurdle or two yet.”

*****

Mickey had his back to Ian and was putting his discuses away, being sure to bend over real slow each time. Mickey’s ass was top shelf, he knew it, and didn’t have any shame using it to get what he wanted. And what he wanted was Ian Gallagher, on him and in him.

“Just make sure I don’t fall ass over tit cos Nationals is only two months away,” he said, picking up his bag and following Gallagher out onto the track.

Ian looked over his shoulder at him, “Mickey, you like some ass over tit?”

Ian turned and stopped, so he did too. They were drinking each other in as he tried to decide how to

play this. He was so fucking horny he wanted Ian to fuck him senseless right there in lane three on the track. But he could see Ian was used to getting what he wanted and then moving on. It seemed downright fucking stupid that Mickey wanted more than a quick fuck, or that he might pass on the opportunity, but something in his gut was telling him to play hard to get. Everyone said yes to this cocky motherfucker, so maybe Mickey would be the first to say no.

"*You* like ass more than tit, Gallagher?" he said, throwing the question back at Ian.

Ian started laughing. "Thought everyone around here knew I liked ass. And cock. Not exactly a secret."

Ian took a couple of steps closer to him and his heart rate picked up as those green eyes searched for answers. Beads of sweat were glistening on Ian's bare chest, and he was almost certain that Ian's 'package' had expanded. He reached up and placed his hand over Ian's left pec, then brushed his thumb across the erect nipple. "Depends on the tit but, yeah, I like cock." He didn't wait for Ian to reply, instead walking past him and putting his bag down on the side of the track. Ian's moan didn't escape his attention, and he felt himself harden at the redhead's response. "So teach me how to hurdle, Gallagher."

Mickey felt smug as shit. Ian wanted his ass so fucking bad, and Mickey was more than capable of delaying gratification. His entire fucked-up childhood and his athletic training had taught him that, and he would use every ounce of self-control to get what he wanted. He would not be Gallagher's Sunday afternoon bitch. If Mickey had any say in it, Ian would soon be begging on his knees.

Ian put the hurdles down a couple of notches and took him through the basic technique. It was fucking complicated, and the amount of eye-fucking they were engaging in made it difficult to concentrate. After about thirty minutes, Ian had him going slowly over a few hurdles.

"Mick, you're a quick learner. You're doing great. I mean, don't give up throwing or anything…" Ian laughed, and Mickey shoved him playfully with his shoulder. "Hey, just one more thing that will help."

Ian moved behind him. "Ok, Mick, lift your lead leg…good, now as you extend." Ian grasped his hips. "See, you need to keep your hips level. Try one more time." Mickey lifted his leg again as Ian squeezed his hips and leant in close. He could feel Ian's hot breath on his neck, and he resisted the urge to press his ass back. "That's better." Mickey placed his foot back down just as Ian brushed his hands over his ass and whispered in his ear, "Mmm, this fucking ass, Mickey."

Mickey turned around, locking eyes with Ian. "Thanks for the lesson Gallagher. Guess I'll see you around." He started backing away, picked up his bag and flung it over his shoulder.

"Mick, I need your number," Ian said, moving toward him.

"I'm in Aston Hall. Sure, you can find me if you want to."

"What about dinner tonight?"

"Busy." He was walking away, throwing a smirk over his shoulder, raising an eyebrow suggestively.

"Don't you want my number? Where I live?"

Ian had his arms out, palms up, a shocked look on his face. It was fucking priceless.

"Later, Gallagher."

“Mickey…”

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Ian watched Mickey stride across the field toward the exit. The swagger on the man. Fuck, that ass was hot. Damn, he wanted to bite into it, kiss it, lick it, fuck it! This guy! No one had turned him down in two fucking years. And he liked Mickey, too. The confidence, the hard edge. He wanted to peel back the layers and get to know him. Shit, what was he thinking right now? He didn’t have time to date, to have a relationship. Maybe he had time to pass by Aston Hall on his way to class in the morning? Maybe. Fucking shouldn’t. But maybe…

First date?

Chapter Summary

Picking up Sunday night with Mickey after their first meeting at the track.

Chapter Notes

I had quite a lot of requests to extend this into a multi-chapter - so here we go!
I hope you enjoy!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Mickey couldn't get comfortable in his bed no matter what position he laid in. And the problem wasn't the ache in his shoulder - it was Ian Gallagher taking up way too much headspace. Walking away from Ian earlier in the day had been challenging. Now, as he rolled onto his stomach and ground down into the mattress - his half hard cock desperate for some relief—he was questioning his decision-making. If he'd gone out for dinner with Gallagher, he'd most likely be getting his dick sucked or a good pounding right now.

"Fuck," he whispered into his pillow. Mickey's roommate, Jerry, was out like a light, thank god, so he rolled back over and slipped a hand into his boxers. Why did Gallagher have to be so hot? And why was he so adorable with those puppy dog eyes and that contagious smile? Sure, he was a little on the cocky side, but not enough to be a douche. In fact, he was a lot nicer than Mickey thought he would be.

Mickey stroked his dick softly, teasing himself, then fondled his balls as thoughts of Ian's abs filled his mind. Accepting the fact that he wasn't getting any sleep unless he got the release he craved, he grabbed the lube from his nightstand and got to work in earnest. The room was dark, so if he kept quiet Jerry would be none the wiser. He came in an embarrassingly short amount of time while thinking about kissing the guy. What the fuck was he thinking? It was a new experience, and it dawned on him that he'd never fantasised about kissing anyone before. And it scared him a little.

After cleaning himself up, he rolled onto his side and closed his eyes, sleep coming easy to him in his post orgasm haze. The last thought to cross his mind was will Ian track him down, or did he blow his chance?

*****

Ian opened his eyes the moment his alarm went off at 6.30am and his first thought was Mickey. He'd had a filthy sex dream about the man and was now sporting a raging boner. It had been a long time since he'd wanted someone this much, and it wasn't surprising with the way men had been throwing themselves on his dick the past year. Mickey resisting him was like waving a red flag in front of a bull. Ian wanted him. But it was more than just lust. There was something

different about Mickey that intrigued him.

Jumping out of bed, he made his way to the shower, grateful almost every day for his single room and private bathroom. It took him all of two minutes to orgasm under the hot water, thoughts of full lips around his cock driving him over the edge quickly.

As he didn't have a class until 8.30am, he wanted to track down Mickey beforehand. Once dried and his teeth clean, he threw on his favourite jeans and a ridiculously tight-fitting shirt and made his way out. That part of him—that stressed, anxiety fuelled part—was whispering in his ear, reminding him he didn't have time for romance, that he needed to focus on his training. But he ignored it, if only for the time being.

Ten minutes later he found himself at Aston Hall feeling nervous as all fuck. Picking a door at random, he knocked and waited, asking a rather pissed off jock if he knew which room Mickey Milkovich lived in. Ian couldn't say he blamed the guy, it was 7.05am. He then banged on a couple more doors before moving onto level two when luck struck. Another track and field athlete let him know Mickey lived on the third floor in room 33.

Bounding up the stairs three at a time—benefits of being a hurdler—he found himself in front of Mickey's door and out of breath. Not from physical exertion, but from the fear of fucking this up. He realised he wanted Mickey to like him, and not for his minor celebrity status or his body, and that made him feel inadequate. So much so, that he lifted his hand to knock and then hesitated. "Fuck," he muttered, then took a deep breath to calm himself before rapping on the door three times.

The door swung open, "Too fuckin' earl-"

Mickey was standing in front of him, jaw dropped, and eyes wide, dressed in a towel. Yes, Ian was staring at Mickey's bare chest and abs, a towel slung low on his hips and nothing else. The silence went on as Ian took in the trail of hair leading down to Mickey's dick—a dick he could see the outline of through the thin towel. Holy fuck!

When Ian finally looked up, Mickey had the smuggest smirk on his face. Closing his own mouth, he cleared his throat and managed to speak, "Morning Mick. Guess I found you."

"That's some genius fuckin' detective work there, Holmes, but I gotta get ready for my morning gym session."

Ian hardened in his jeans as his eyes took in the wet hair flopping over Mickey's forehead and the best pecs he'd seen in a long time. "What about breakfast? You gotta eat before your session."

Mickey put his hand up on the doorframe and looked Ian up and down. "Got my breakfast shit here, Gallagher."

Ian was having a lot of trouble remembering words, let alone how to form sentences. "Um…well… come on Mick, we can head down to the café here on campus. They have great pancakes."

Mickey licked his lips, smiled, and then reached forward, lifting his shirt and exposing his abs. "Doesn't look like you eat pancakes, man. Not in competition season anyway."

Leaning against the doorframe and bringing their bodies closer, only inches apart, Ian said, "For you, I can make an exception." They stared at each other for a while, and Ian wanted nothing more than to glance down and see if Mickey's dick was reacting under that towel. Feeling a little more like himself, his confidence rising as he registered the desire in Mickey's eyes, he leant forward,

whispering in Mickey's ear, "For you, I could make a lot of exceptions."

Mickey stepped back and chuckled, "You're fuckin' something else, Gallagher. Hope you can back up that ego of yours."

"Only one way to find out. Come on, it's just breakfast. I'll meet you out front in ten."

Ian backed away, winked at Mickey, and headed toward the stairs. The moment he was out of sight he slumped against the wall in the stairwell, wondering why he was such a cocky motherfucker. Mickey was obviously going to play hard to get, and that was getting him hard. Ian was a man after all, and the thrill of the chase was a cliché; a true one. He had a strong inclination that Mickey bottomed, regardless of his dominant personality, and he hoped that wasn't just wishful thinking on his behalf. He wanted to fuck Mickey real bad.

Bounding down the steps, he leaned against the wall outside and waited. If Mickey didn't appear, he would have to re-think his strategy and consider his next move carefully. He reminded himself again that he didn't have time for anything other than casual hook-ups and consoled himself that if that's all it came to, then so be it.

*****

Mickey was throwing on his training gear, flustered as fuck, and in two minds about how to handle Gallagher. He was out of his depth; never had a dude asked him out, like on a date. Because this was a fucking date, wasn't it? Sitting down on his bed to tie his laces, he started laughing like a madman at the thought of Terry finding out he was going on a date. With a man. In public. Fuck, maybe he wasn't ready for this? Gallagher was so 'out' and if Mickey was with him, then he would be 'out' by association. While he had accepted he was gay, it wasn't like he wanted to advertise it.

Checking his watch, he realised ten minutes had passed. He had to decide. Grabbing his cell off the charger and his wallet, he checked his hair in the mirror and headed out. Maybe Gallagher hadn't waited, and fate would decide for him. He opened the front door and walked out into the morning sun.

"Was just about to give up on you, Milkovich."

Mickey turned to see Ian leaning up against the building, smile on his lips and mischief in his eyes.

"Better make this quick, I don't like to mess up my schedule."

Ian pushed off the wall and strolled over to his side. "What athlete does?"

They made their way over to the campus café, exchanging small talk about the up-and-coming competition meet in less than two weeks, then grabbed a corner table.

"So, what are you having, Mick? You carbo loading for your gym session?"

"I might try these pancakes you speak so highly of and an omelette. Guess you gotta stay lean?"

"Yeah, egg white omelette on multi-grain toast for me. But maybe I can sneak a taste…" Ian paused, looking up from his menu and held his gaze, "of your pancakes."

"These lame ass lines always work for you?" Mickey teased. They were working on him too - a

visual of Ian tasting him, sucking him down, flashing through his mind.

Ian threw his head back and laughed. It was the fucking dorkiest laugh he'd ever heard, and yet Mickey loved it.

"They actually fucking do," Ian replied, looking proud of himself.

The waiter took their order and there was an awkward silence before Ian spoke again, "You here cos you want a career in athletics or for the free ride education?"

"I never thought I'd end up good enough to get a scholarship, or even be able to consider this as a career, but now things are coming together, and yeah, I'd like to do this for as long as I can. Maybe get to travel, see the fuckin' world. I'm assuming you are going pro as soon as you can?"

Ian leaned back and looked up, thinking about his answer. "I've been on this career path for a long time now and never wanted to do anything else. My Dad got me into it when I was about 8 and he tells me I was a natural. So, yeah, the education is a bonus, but athletics is the plan. I'm that guy that dreams of taking Olympic gold. Sacrificed a lot already, so not stopping until I achieve it."

Mickey could tell straight off the bat that Ian Gallagher was putting a shit ton of pressure on himself, and this overly confident persona he projected was covering up the harsh realities of being a high achiever. It almost made Mickey happy no one ever expected anything of him, including himself. "I'm sure you'll get there, man. You're fuckin' talented."

"Yeah? Thought you knew nothing about me."

"Fuck off, Gallagher. Everyone knows about you around here." Mickey's phone vibrated and he picked it up cos it was Mandy. He opened the text and checked all was ok before putting it back down on the table. "Hey, I'm just going to the bathroom before the food gets here." Mickey stood up and headed off in the direction of the restroom.

*****

Ian watched Mickey head across the café and without a second thought grabbed Mickey's phone before it locked—if Mickey forgot to lock it then what could he expect? While he was setting up a new contact, the waiter brought their food over. Ian called himself and got the phone back in place just before Mickey returned.

As Mickey sat down, he asked, "What's got you looking so fuckin' proud of yourself?"

"What? Nothing. Just glad we're doing this."

"And what the fuck are we doing, Ian?"

"Whatever you want, Mickey." Blue eyes were scanning over his face, looking for answers, and Ian wished he knew what Mickey was looking for.

They ate a few bites and eye fucked each other until Ian couldn't help himself and extended his leg, brushing their calves together under the table.

"You fuckin' serious right now?" Mickey said, eyebrows shooting up into his hairline.

Ian wasn't going to be deterred and continued on, "You wanna come over tonight? Got a single

room, no roommate to worry about."

Ian felt Mickey remove his leg and his stomach dropped in disappointment. "And then what?" Mickey asked.

"And then whatever you want, Mickey. We really gonna play this game?"

"From what I hear, playing games is your area of fuckin' expertise," Mickey said, his voice taking on a new harshness.

Ian placed his knife and fork down, wondering how this went sideways so fucking fast. Did Ian know he had a reputation for fucking every queer that came his way? Yes, he did. But that had never been a problem for anyone before. Apparently Mickey was not your average fag. Ian was about to ask him if he was in the closet, because all signs were pointing to it, when he spotted last weekend's hook-up approaching their table. Fucking hell!

*****

Mickey wasn't sure why he was pissed at Gallagher. Whether it was the leg under the table, Ian's presumption that they were gonna bang later or that he wanted those things too. To make matters worse, a good-looking blonde dude approached their table, complete with fucking heart eyes. Mickey sat back in his chair and folded his arms.

"Hey Ian, how you been? You get my messages?" The blonde asked.

Mickey watched Ian get awkward and flustered, looking from the blonde and back to Mickey.

"Hey Blaine. This is Mickey. Mickey, this is Blaine," Ian said, introducing them. Mickey nodded and kept his arms folded.

Fucking Blaine just ignored him, instead moving in closer to Gallagher and placing a hand on the back of Ian's neck. "Ian, babe, we had such a great time. Thought maybe we could catch up this weekend again. Or tonight or whenever you're free."

That was enough for Mickey. He got up, chair scrapping loudly across the wooden floor as he took out his wallet, grabbing some cash and throwing it on the table.

"Mickey…you going? Don't go, finish your breakfast. Blaine was just leaving." Ian was up out of his seat now too.

"All good Gallagher, whatever. See ya round." Mickey headed out, pissed as all fuck. He knew he was being unreasonable. He knew he was feeling jealous. And he knew none of it made any fucking sense.

*

An hour into his gym session his phone vibrated three times in a row, so he finished up his set then checked his notifications. The texts were all from *Hot Ginger,* and Mickey couldn't stop himself from laughing. Part of him was pissed that Gallagher did this without his consent, but he was impressed too. Back Southside, he would have beaten the shit out of someone for it, but he was a long way from home now.

Opening the message thread, he read…

Mickey, I'm sorry. Don't know WTF I did, but I'm sorry for ALL of it.

Need a second chance

Can you give me one? I promise I'm worth it 😉

Mickey finished up his gym session, hit the showers and headed to his first class of the day. It wasn't until lunch that he considered replying. Hot ginger needed to sweat it out for a while. When his phone started vibrating, he just knew it was Gallagher before he even looked.

Mick?

How was your gym session?

You bench today? I want to see you bench press. All sweaty.

And shirtless!

Mickey knew Ian was going to keep this shit up until he replied, so he tapped out a text, a smile playing at his lips. And maybe some butterflies in his stomach.

Gallagher ur a sneaky bastard! Keep your filthy fingers off my cell.

Can I put my filthy fingers somewhere else then?

Mickey hadn't flirted before. Ever. But he liked it and felt himself blush when he read Ian's reply.

That's still up for debate. Your fingers got any skills?

Hmmm…my fingering skills make my hurdling skills look amateurish

I can offer a free demo so you can judge for yourself

Mickey laughed out loud at this fucking dork. He packed up his lunch wrappers and discarded them in the bin, all the while wondering how to respond. As he headed across campus for his next class, Ian tried again.

Seriously Mickey

Second chance? You training today?

Meet me at the track? Around 5?

Heart beating too fast, Mickey replied…

ok

Chapter End Notes

In this AU Ian has been brought up by Clayton - but we'll get into that more later in the story.

Please comment, subscribe and Kudos if you are enjoying this story - I can't stress how much that keeps an author motivated to continue and is so very appreciated.

** Please check out my other WIP "Captive" if you haven't had a chance. It's an A/B/O if you're into that!
Take care everyone!!
Rachael x

Pick me up, bitch

Chapter Summary

This chapter picks up a week later.

Chapter Notes

NOTE: Disrespectful language regarding mental health disorder.

Ian's texts are in ITALIC and Mickey's texts are in BOLD ITALIC

Hope you enjoy this chapter - where two 19 years olds have mixed feelings about what they want and how they feel about each other. (Regular teen confusion.)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

A week had passed since Mickey relented and met Ian at the track. Ian had backed off physically, although certainly not verbally, and that surprised him. Then he realized Gallagher was trying to draw him in and force Mickey to make the first move. Mickey had to give it to him; it was a smart move because sex with Ian was all he could think about.

They had met up for lunch once and for coffee twice, along with some casual flirting at the track. This included Ian winking at him as he ran past the discus cage, stopping to stretch suggestively, or pulling his top off and leaning against the cage to ask Mickey how his day was going. All done at a distance, all aimed at seducing him. Yeah, Ian Gallagher was fucking smooth.

But Mickey was pleased with the new, slower pace as he considered his options. He knew he could take Ian as a fuck buddy with the snap of his fingers, but how quickly would Ian tire of him and did he care either way? They got along great and it felt like a friendship was forming—something he'd never shared with anyone before. It felt good, and maybe he didn't want to throw that away. Having a gay friend to navigate this new freedom away from Terry might be better than a boyfriend. Even the word - boyfriend - made him uncomfortable as fuck. He should be getting dicked down by a different guy each week, not thinking about a relationship. Not thinking about being exclusive.

Ian had talked a lot about how he needed to focus exclusively on Nationals and then World Juniors. It was Ian's number one priority and while Mickey respected that, it also gave him cause for concern. Mickey didn't think Ian had any time in his life for anything other than hurdling—people came a distant second—and maybe Mickey didn't want to be an afterthought in Ian's life. Truthfully, he had feelings for Ian already. For the first time in his life, he understood his sexual orientation beyond sex. He wasn't just gay because he liked a man's dick in his ass; he was gay because he was capable of falling in love with a man. The revelation was both shocking and freeing.

Something Ian did constantly that Mickey never thought he'd like was texting. Morning, noon, and night Gallagher was sending him stupid thoughts, random pics, and requests for an actual date. For

seven days straight Mickey had declined every time, but he was feeling all kinds of soft when Ian's latest texts came in…

Mickey…

I'm in Northgate standing outside this new restaurant

The fuck I care

They got these private booths and it's called Mickey's Menu

Mick, it's fate!

I booked us a table for 7pm tomorrow night

I'm not free tomorrow

Mickey was bullshitting; he was free as a fucking bird. Hot Ginger needed to sweat it some more.

Mickey, come on!

I want to eat off your Mickey menu ☺

Lame ass, corny motherfucker

Interested to know…what exactly do you mean when you say you want to eat off my menu?

Mickey stood for a whole two minutes, licking his lips and waiting for Ian's reply. He was not disappointed.

That fine of ass of yours.

Milkovich one day you're gonna let me feast on it.

But tomorrow let me take you on a date and buy you dinner

It'll be embarrassing for you if I beg at the track in front of your coach

And you know I'll do it!

Mickey was still hot and flustered thinking about Ian eating him out. No one had done that to him. He'd seen it in porn and always wondered what it felt like. Now he was picturing Ian lapping at his hole, wiggling his tongue inside him. Mickey adjusted himself, his dick rock hard in his pants.

Alright chill. 7pm tomorrow. Pick me up bitch.

*****

When they entered the restaurant, Ian held back, staring at Mickey's ass in his tight black jeans. It was the best ass he'd ever laid eyes on and he was sick of fantasising about what it might look like —he wanted to see it naked and in the flesh. He imagined spreading those cheeks apart for the first time, and moaned at the thought, the anticipation now so great.

Throughout the last week he'd gained some ground with Mickey, flirting but not pushing too hard. Mickey seemed comfortable with his sexuality, but only when he could control its level of transparency. To Ian, Mickey was a new gay—trying to find his way in the world, still getting comfortable with his identity. He remembered going through that process at fourteen and fifteen and was glad it was behind him. Mickey was carrying something from his past, something that made him guarded, and Ian hoped Mickey might open up to him tonight.

They were seated at a booth and ordered beers—Ian was impressed with his fake ID until he saw Mickey's—then they checked out the menu. Twenty minutes later their dinners arrived, and Ian put an end to their regular college/athletics conversation. "Mick, tell me about your family and where you're from."

Mickey froze, fork halfway to his mouth. "The fuck you wanna know bout my family?"

"I wanna know about *you*, Mickey. So that means learning about your past, your childhood, your family. That's what friends do; they share shit with each other." Ian almost wanted to laugh at Mickey's expression, anyone would have thought he asked him to murder someone.

"Gallagher, you wanna share shit, then you start."

"Fine. I grew up in Indianapolis with my Dad, Clayton, my stepmom, Lucy, and my half-brother, Jacob. I didn't find out until I was fourteen that Lucy was my stepmom, I just thought she was my Mom. Growing up, she was always sort of cold and distant and it never felt like she loved me the same as Jacob, so it was kind of a relief in a way." Ian took a bite of his food, finding the topic hard to talk about.

Mickey leaned forward, a frown on his face. "So, who the fuck was your real Mom then?"

"A woman named Monica, who had five other kids with my Uncle Frank. She's batshit crazy. Has bipolar and never stays in one place too long. She didn't want Frank to know she cheated on him, so she dropped me off with my Dad when I was two weeks old."

"Fuck, man. It must've been rough finding out at fourteen. You see your real Mom or your other brothers and sisters?" Mickey suddenly jerked back in his seat, eyes going wide, "Hold the fuck up, where does your uncle Frank and all these other kids live?"

"In Chicago. Southside. Why?"

Mickey laughed, throwing his knife and fork down on the table. "I live like two blocks from the fuckin' Gallaghers. Everyone knows Frank, he's a drunk, yeah? And my sister Mandy was dating your brother Lip last year."

Ian was dumbfounded and speechless. "You serious? My brother Philip is dating your sister?" Mickey was grinning at him, and Ian felt a giggle rise in his throat. "Mick, this is fucking insane. I went to visit them six months ago because I wanted to get the chance to know them. I stayed a week. You telling me you were two blocks away the whole time? Well, fuck me."

"I'm thinking about it," Mickey said, eyes sparkling with mischief.

Glancing down at Mickey's mouth and then back up to his eyes, he said, "I can't think about anything else."

"Fuck off, Gallagher. We both know every fag on campus is lining up for your dick, so if you need to get laid…"

"Maybe I'm only interested in one."

"You trying to tell me you haven't hooked up with anyone since we met?"

Ian knew Mickey was trying to bait him and he wasn't buying into it. He teased Mickey instead. "Why? Would you be jealous if I did?"

"Would you be jealous if I did?" Mickey said, throwing the question back at him, eyebrows raised in challenge.

Ian sat back in the booth and eyed Mickey, trying to figure out how to play it. "Fuck yeah, I'd be jealous," he replied, making sure Mickey knew he was serious.

Mickey finished his beer, then leaned forward. Ian's heart picked up under the gaze of those blue eyes. "You wanna share a dessert with me, Gallagher?" Ian chuckled, Mickey was gaining in confidence and it suited him.

"Probably shouldn't, but since this is our first actual date, I'm gonna make an exception."

They ordered a giant Sundae meant for two, and as soon as it arrived, Ian tried again. "Come on, Mick, tell me more about growing up in Southside, Chicago."

"You just don't know when to quit, do you? You're a persistent fucker."

"Wouldn't be any good at hurdles if I wasn't. Come on Mick, how many siblings? That's an easy one, and I already know you got at least one sister called Mandy."

"One sister, one brother, my Mom ran off when I was ten and my Pops is a racist, homophobic prick. Whole family are career criminals, in and out of prison. Deal in drugs, guns and anything else to make a quick buck. Grew up poor as fuck, stealing shit and bashing in heads like Pops taught me."

Ian's eyes were growing wider with every word coming out of Mickey's mouth. After staying in Chicago, he knew the place was rough, and his half siblings had a tough life, but this sounded a thousand times worse. "Fuck, Mickey. I don't know what to say. And I can't imagine growing up gay with a homophobic Dad either. Were you out?"

"Fuck no. My Pops would kill me if he found out I was gay. Used to beat the shit out of me for the fuckin' fun of it. Look Ian, if I'm being honest, this shit's all new to me. This isn't just our first date, it's my first date. Ever."

Ian could see the fear, embarrassment and maybe even some shame on Mickey's face and it hit

him hard. Leaning across the table, he placed his hand over Mickey's. "Mick, I'm kinda honoured that you chose me for your first date and I'm glad you're free of your Dad. That's fucked up."

Mickey pulled his hand away and Ian felt disappointed, but not surprised. They were in very different places in their lives, and Ian wasn't sure if he should pursue this any further. There was a fragility to Mickey and a softness underneath the gruff exterior that he felt drawn to, but he needed to be mindful of that when his priority was his career. Maybe Mickey needed more time, more care, than Ian had available. Yet, Mickey was constantly on his mind – when he was falling asleep, in the shower, doing reps at the gym and sitting in lectures. Truth was, he'd never spent this much time thinking about anyone else before.

After dinner, Ian led Mickey to a local park popular with couples. It had a man-made lake with ducks and fairy lights in the trees. Ian knew Mickey would object to the romantic setting, and he was ready for it.

"The fuck is this, Ian?" Mickey asked the moment they started walking the path around the lake.

"It's a lake, Mick."

"I can see it's a fuckin' lake. What are we doing here?"

Ian stopped and turned to face Mickey. "We're on a date, remember? And on dates you do romantic shit."

"The fuck do two men need to do romantic shit? We're fags, Gallagher. We want to fuck each other, we fuck."

Ian couldn't help himself and burst into laughter. Whether it was Mickey's words or the look on his face, he couldn't say for sure.

"What the fuck is so funny?"

"You, Mickey. You. First, I've been trying to fuck you since I laid eyes on you and since the direct approach didn't work, I'm trying to woo you. Second, I'm a fuckin' sap and I like romance. And shockingly, I'm still a man."

"Did you fuckin' say woo? What nineteen-year-old says woo? Jesus, Gallagher, you sure you're a top, you sound like a chick."

Ian was still smiling when he grabbed Mickey's hand and threaded their fingers together. Mickey's eyes widened in shock, but Ian held tight and started walking, Mickey having no choice but to follow along unless he wanted to make a scene. "Mick, maybe you need to get past some of these stereotypes. And yes, I prefer to top. Did you bring it up cos you weren't sure? If I wasn't a top, it would be a waste," he said, winking at Mickey.

Ian watched Mickey blush, then pulled him over to a park bench so they could sit and watch the family of ducks swimming by. He still had a hold of Mickey's hand and he rested them on his thigh. When Mickey said nothing and kept his eyes averted, Ian continued, "Mick? Did I read this wrong?"

"Shit, you talk a lot. No, you didn't read it wrong, I prefer to bottom and by the size of your dick…"

"You've been checking out my dick?"

“Can’t fuckin’ miss it in those compression tights you’ve always got on.”

They both laughed, Ian glad for a break in the tension. “Mick, you don’t have to answer this, but have you had a lot of…you know…sexual partners?”

“Not a slut like you, Gallagher. But I’ve fucked just as many girls as guys. Mostly random hook-ups. Had to fuck girls to keep my Pops off my back. There was one dude I hooked up with a lot, you know, like a regular fuck buddy.”

Ian screwed up his face at the thought of fucking a woman. “How the fuck did you get it up, let alone keep it up, for a chick?” he asked.

“You seriously never fucked a woman before?”

“No, inexperienced vagina fucker here.”

“Let’s put it this way, when you’re worried your Pops is going to kill you, you figure it out. You close your eyes and think about the best porn you’ve ever seen. And when someone jerks your dick, or sucks on it, or you stick it in a hole, it responds. Doesn’t mean you enjoy it, but it’s possible.”

*****

Mickey’s hand was sweating in Ian’s. He’d never held hands with a dude, and it felt weird but not altogether bad. Strike that, it felt nice, but he kept hearing his Pop’s voice in his head–‘fuckin’ faggot,’ ‘pole smoking queer,’ and ‘shirt lifter,’ - intruding on this near perfect date. Not that he knew if the date was a good one because he had nothing to compare it to, but the more time he spent with Ian the more he liked him. Mickey had never shared his past with anyone, and the ease with which he told Ian had shocked him. He barely knew Ian and was spilling his fucking guts, being vulnerable or some stupid shit.

Ian had gone quiet since he mentioned fucking girls, but then lifted their joined hands and placed a kiss to the back of Mickey’s. It made him feel like a girl and he fought his instinct to pull away, knowing Ian was trying to show him empathy. “Mickey, thank fuck you got a scholarship. I’m glad I chose this place. Glad you’re here with me.” Ian stared at him with such softness, and longing, and he couldn’t look away.

The pull between them, the tension, was there just like the first day they met, except now there was also an emotional pull threading its way amongst the sexual desire. It was a new feeling, terrifying and exciting, and a lot more complicated than simple lust. Ian Gallagher scared the fuck out of him. Gazing into those green eyes, he marvelled at the specks of blue and yellow, his heart all the while thumping hard and fast in his chest. When Ian reached a hand up to his face, his breath shuddered with anticipation. Ian was going to kiss him. It would be his first time kissing another man, and he wanted it more than he ever thought possible.

It happened in slow motion; Ian stroking his thumb across his cheek as he pressed forward, Mickey licked his own lips as his eyes dropped to Ian’s mouth, and then warmth, softness, fucking fireworks as his body reacted. Ian’s hand stroked up into his hair and a tongue swiped gently across his lips. He willingly opened up, Ian licking into his mouth, their tongues finding each other and swirling together. A moan arose from deep in his chest. He would have been embarrassed if it weren’t for Ian joining in with one of his own as they deepened the kiss, Mickey finally taking a hand to Ian’s neck and pulling him closer.

When Ian pulled away, they were both breathless and Mickey was shaking. He wanted to do it again. And he wanted to run and never look back.

“Where d'you learn to kiss like that?” Ian asked, his hand still caressing Mickey’s throat.

Mickey ignored the question and stood up, still fighting the need to run. Run far away from Ian. Far away from whatever the fuck was happening between them. “Hey, we should get back. I got a morning session, and coach Reynolds will roast me if I’m tired. We got that meet next weekend.”

Ian was looking at him, disappointment in those puppy dog eyes. “Okay, lets go then,” Ian said, standing up and heading out of the park. Mickey felt like shit. He knew he was giving the impression he didn’t enjoy the kiss, when the problem was the complete opposite. He wanted to say something but felt like a fucking jerk.

Ian walked him up to his dorm room, even when Mickey told him not to bother. They had been quiet on the way back, and Mickey didn’t want to end their night like this. Fortunately, there wasn’t anyone milling around on his level. Taking a deep breath, he manned up and took both of Ian’s hands in his own. “Ian, I had a fuckin’ good time tonight, but as I said, this dating shit. Whatever the fuck this is, is new to me. Maybe we should’ve just banged that first day and gone our separate ways.”

Ian stepped in, pinning his arms above his head and bringing their bodies flush, his back now firmly pressed against his door. Holy mother of god. His dick hardened in seconds, Ian’s not far behind. Ian looked at him intently before lavishing his neck with kisses and whispering hotly in his ear, “Once would never be enough.” Then those lips were on his again. This time he eagerly pushed his tongue into Ian’s mouth, just as Ian rutted against him. Jesus, fuck, his body was burning up.

And then it was gone. Ian had stepped away and was backing down the hall. “Sweet dreams, Mick.” With a cheeky wink, Ian turned and headed down the stairwell. It took Mickey a full minute to collect himself. Fucking Gallagher was playing hard. With shaking hands, he unlocked his door and went inside. His roommate was spending the night at his girlfriend’s, so he stripped himself naked and grabbed his lube. Five minutes later he came all over his bedsheets with two fingers up his ass while he moaned Ian over and over again.

After he cleaned up, he put his phone on the charger and climbed under the duvet. He needed sleep, but he was still horny as fuck. It felt like the stupid hot ginger had gained the upper hand and Mickey was having none of it. Ian thought he was good at being a tease, but he hadn’t seen nothing yet. Mickey had spent years keeping control of his lust for men, he could keep it in his pants if he wanted. At least until he had Ian back where he wanted him. Wherever the fuck that was.

The moment he turned the light off, his phone vibrated. Picking it up, he opened the message, “fuck me” falling from his lips at the sight of the photo. Ian was holding his rock-hard dick in one hand and swiping his thumb through his pre-cum with the other. Mickey realised Ian must be 8-10 inches since his hand only covered the lower half of his dick. And it was a beautiful looking dick. Before he knew it, he was zooming in closer and jerking himself again, imagining that cock deep inside him. Just as he shot his load for the second time in 30 minutes his phone vibrated again. Opening the message, it said…

Came so fucking hard thinking about you, Mickey Milkovich

Chapter End Notes

Please leave a comment if you have time - love hearing from everyone! Don't forget to subscribe and kudos. (Or user subscribe) Thank you so much for reading.

Next chapter of CAPTIVE will hopefully be up Monday or Tuesday. Sorry I can't stick to a regular schedule like I used to but I'm back to working long hours and have to fit in writing whenever I can grab some time.

Take care!!
Rachael x

Competition and pizza dates

Chapter Summary

This chapter picks up a week after their first official date!

Chapter Notes

Some possible unusual phrases...
PB = personal best (time or distance)
blocks = starting blocks used at the beginning of races
call room = where athletes check in before competing
I've also used 'comp' when referring to a competition

I got a bit dirty in this chapter! LOL Hope you enjoy!! ;)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Mickey was glad the competition was on home soil because the past week had been full-on with training. Travel would have just stressed him out. Sometimes, he thought Coach Garcia pushed him too hard, but with six weeks to go before Nationals he had to suck it up to peak at the right time.

His discus was in the morning and hammer in the early afternoon, so he had a long day ahead where he needed to manage his time to ensure his best performance in both events. There was no doubt he was better at discus and he planned to talk to his coach about dropping hammer and focussing only on discus. With his recent PB's, there was a chance he could secure a place on the U.S. team for Worlds. Mickey never thought that was on the cards, but with a bit of luck, and a lot of hard work, it was now a possibility.

Nearing the completion of his warmup, he scanned the track, searching for Ian or any other hurdlers. Ian had a heat late morning and then his final late afternoon. A week had passed since their date, but they had only seen each other briefly—Ian's training schedule taking up every waking second that he wasn't in class. Truth be told, Mickey was worried about it, Ian seemed fatigued, something he shouldn't be this early in the season. They had chatted each day—either at the track, or the gym—or texted. But other than Ian stealing a quick kiss here and there, things hadn't progressed. There hadn't been time, and that suited Mickey just fine. Ian was intense and confident, and Mickey needed time to catch up with what he was feeling for the redhead.

With only 20 minutes before he needed to check-in at the call room, he spotted Ian arriving at the warm-up track with his training partner, David, and headed towards them. Ian saw Mickey approaching and that beautiful smile spread across his face. He loved how that felt, someone lighting up at the sight of him. It wasn't something he had experienced before, but he could definitely get used to it.

"Morning Mick, you finished your warm-up?" Ian asked, as they hugged quickly.

“Yeah, just finished. Due in the call room in 20. How you feeling?”

“Bit tight. Hope I feel better after my warm-up.”

Mickey could see Ian looked flat, a bad way to be on competition day. “Take it easy, don’t push too hard. This comp don’t mean shit in the long run. I gotta head off. I’ll make sure I catch your heat.”

“If I can work it, I hope to see at least one of your throws, Mick.”

Backing away, Mickey said, “All good, Gallagher. Come find me after your race.”

“Good luck, Mick.”

“You too,” he said, then turned and headed off to the call room.

*

An hour later Mickey walked into the discus cage feeling good. His first throw was only 3 centimetres off his PB, and his mind and body appeared to be on the same page. As he took his stance, he heard a familiar voice.

“You got this, Mick.”

Just a hint of a smile crossed his face, but he didn’t look, didn’t want to be distracted by Gallagher’s flaming red hair or beaming smile. But having someone watching, cheering him on, someone on his side, gave him the adrenaline rush he needed. Focusing on the weight of the discus in his hand, and his stance, everything went quiet. With one final breath, he visualised the throw and then…

Mickey watched the discus fly through the air, and he knew it was good. Knew it before it landed. He exited the cage, and he heard Ian clapping and cheering. It was a new PB—an extra 14 centimetres and he was fucking ecstatic. It was also his second world qualifying throw - putting him one step closer to selection. He checked the track was clear and then crossed over to the fence where Ian was standing.

“That’s your second world qualifier, isn’t it? And a PB.”

“Fuckin’ ay it is,” he replied, unable to wipe the smile off his face. He wanted to kiss Ian. Wanted to hug him and thought knew Ian did too, but they just smiled awkwardly at each other.

“Mick, want to kiss you,” Ian whispered.

Looking around them first, Mickey lunged forward and gave Ian a quick peck on the lips. “I gotta head back, still got another throw. You heading to the call room?”

“Yeah, got 10 minutes. Wanted to see you throw. Congrats Mick.” Ian brushed their fingers together on the fence, winked at him and backed away.

*****

Ian had been feeling like shit for days. Coach Wells was pushing him hard; telling him he had the potential to set a new under 20 world record. But Worlds were 14 weeks away and he needed to pace himself so he would peak at that competition—not at Nationals in 6 weeks. A few arguments

had already taken place, and Ian missed his junior coach more than he could say.

His heat had gone okay—not needing to push in any way—just getting the job done. Now, as he stood at the start line for the final, awaiting the starting marshal, he realised how flat and fatigued his body felt. He thought of Mickey getting a PB in discus that morning and how proud he was of himself. Ian was proud of him too. If they both went to Worlds together, it would be the icing on the cake. The marshal blew the whistle and jolted Ian out of his thoughts, instantly disturbed by his lack of focus on his race. He shouldn't have been thinking of Mickey, he should have been thinking about his race strategy, keeping his head in the game.

"On your marks," the marshal announced.

Ian squatted down and backed up into the blocks, controlling his breaths so he could settle.

"Set."

Ian pushed up, taking a deep breath in.

The gun fired, and he surged out of the blocks, eye focus coming up slowly during his acceleration phase. Running hurdles was a rhythm, a pattern, and a muscle memory. There were a set number of steps between each hurdle and no deviations. As he approached the sixth hurdle, he felt his left hamstring pull tight, but he was too close to pull up and he had to hurdle it. Doing everything he could to lose velocity and minimise the stretch over the hurdle, he still tweaked his hamstring, pulling up half a dozen strides after the sixth hurdle.

All he wanted to do was sink down to the ground, hide his face, his fear, and the panic that rose up from his gut to his throat. It wasn't bad, a minor tear at most, but every athlete knew the dangers of hamstring tears—for recovery, for recurrences, for fucking-up careers. He had to get off the track, get to the team physio. He had to deal with his coach. Fuck, he only had 6 weeks to Nationals. If he didn't compete and place, he wouldn't be going to Worlds. All the colour drained from his face as the possibility sank in. Limping off the track, he wanted only one person. Mickey.

Fortunately, Mickey was the first person to reach him, warm arms wrapping around, hands stroking his back. Ian buried his face into Mickey's neck, relaxing against him, breathing in his scent. He liked the way Mickey smelled, and it gave him a moment of comfort before his coach was there, ordering him to physio and asking a thousand dumb fucking questions.

Grabbing Mickey by the wrist so he wouldn't leave, Ian followed his coach through the crowd and into the physio room. He could vaguely hear people telling him things like 'it'll be okay' or 'tough break, Gallagher' but he focussed on Mickey - the man lacing their fingers together and squeezing his hand.

Thirty minutes later, he'd been assessed—a very minor tear—that with careful rehab he should be back in time for Nationals. Hamstring iced, he remained laying on the table with his hands draped over his face.

"Rest up, Gallagher, and we'll talk tomorrow," Coach Wells said, voice filled with disappointment.

"Thanks Coach," he replied, unable to look at the man. Anyone would've thought Coach Wells had been injured, he was taking it so hard.

Once it was just him and Mickey, he sat up, swinging his legs over the edge of the physio table, his ice pack strapped to his leg. "You know, I knew I shouldn't have competed today. Should have

listened to my body. Been feeling like shit. I'm a fucking idiot. Now I'm gonna miss Nationals, miss Worlds." He put his face in his hands, overcome with emotion. He was going to cry in front of Mickey. Fuck!

Warm hands rested on his thighs, "Ian, you can't think like that. The physio said it's minor and you'll be back on the track by Nationals."

"Mick, this is everything I've been working towards. I don't even know who the fuck I am without athletics."

Mickey pulled Ian's hands away from his face. "Ian, you are a lot more than just a hurdler."

Ian attempted a smile, finally raising his eyes to meet Mickey's. "What if I can't do this? I miss my coach from back home. Fucking Coach Wells is over-training me. I feel alone in all this. This fucking pressure."

Mickey cupped his jaw, then slid his hand behind his neck. "You're not alone. I'm gonna help you rehab. We'll do it together, okay?"

Ian couldn't believe Mickey would do this for him. They barely knew each other and he was willing to support him, give up his time. "You sure you wanna do that? You've got your own training you need to focus on."

"Wouldn't have offered if I didn't wanna fuckin' do it. Anyway, I'm dropping hammer to concentrate on discus. And besides, I'm getting used to your alien-looking face."

Ian laughed; Mickey had a way with words. He placed his hands on Mickey's hips and pulled him in closer, between his legs. "Thank you."

Mickey leant down and pressed their lips together. It was a simple kiss, but full of intent, and Ian loved it.

*****

For the last week, Mickey had been helping Ian through his rehab exercises every chance he'd had, just like he was now. They had truly become friends; hell, Ian was already the closest friend he'd ever had. They could sit comfortably in silence, or they could hang shit on each other and laugh their fucking heads off. He never knew how much he needed this in his life, and he didn't want to lose it. Which was why he was so hesitant to take it past the kissing, flirting stage. What if they wanted different things? What if Mickey got hurt when Ian moved onto his next conquest?

The sexual attraction was always there, simmering between them, but Ian was single-minded about getting his body back in shape for Nationals, and Mickey understood why. So, Mickey would arrive back at his dorm after seeing Ian and jerk off. He was jerking off so much he thought he might wear his dick out. To say he was conflicted about what he wanted from Ian was a colossal understatement.

Ian was lying on his back on his yoga mat with his left leg lifted. "Mick, last one but don't give me too much resistance. You don't know your own strength."

Mickey laughed and held Ian's ankle, ready for the redhead to push down. He counted the ten seconds as Ian contracted, pushing against the resistance. The hamstring was healing well, Mickey had already noticed an improvement. Offering his hand, Ian grabbed it and Mickey pulled him up

to his feet. “How you feeling?” he asked, heart picking up its pace as Ian hovered close, their bodies almost touching.

“I’m feeling good but would feel even better if you’d go out on another date with me.”

“Thought you wanted to focus on your rehab, Gallagher?” he asked, their hands still joined.

“You know what they say about all work and no play…” Ian replied, a mischievous grin on his face.

Mickey pulled away and sat down on a gym bench, “Yeah, what do they say, Gallagher?”

Ian stepped in between his legs, that giant dick right in front of his face, covered only by thin lyrca. Mickey licked his lips, and he knew Ian noticed because of the chuckle that escaped his lips.

“They say it makes you a dull boy.”

Mickey ran his fingertips up the back of Ian’s thigh, stopping just as he reached his ass. “Don’t think you’ve ever been accused of being dull, Ian.” He flashed his eyes up to look at Ian’s reaction, green eyes watching back intently. As much as Mickey liked the idea of a second date, he had doubts about Ian’s motivations. “Are you just looking for a distraction from the stress you’re under?”

Ian stepped away and began rolling up his yoga mat. “First of all Mick, you’re not just a distraction if that’s what you’re thinking and second, is it that obvious?”

“That you’re stressed out of your fuckin’ mind? Yes. You wanna talk about it?”

Ian sat down next to him on the gym bench, their thighs touching. “I get fucking anxiety. Jesus, this shit’s embarrassing,” Ian said, running a hand through his hair. Mickey said nothing, just waited for Ian to continue. “I’ve had panic attacks before. And I over-analyse everything. You know, get caught up on one thought and my mind won’t switch off. What if I…what if I turn out like…”

Mickey placed his hand on Ian’s neck and squeezed. “You can tell me, Ian. Ain’t gonna judge. I’m so fuckin’ messed up they ain’t got a name for it yet.”

Ian smiled, a tentative hand reaching out and landing on Mickey’s thigh. “Like my Mom. My biological Mom. She’s crazy. Has bipolar and all my half-siblings say that I remind them of her. What if all this anxiety is the start of it?”

“Ian, anyone in your position would feel anxious. You put too much fuckin’ pressure on yourself. And I see the way everyone looks at you. They either worship you or are fuckin’ jealous. I always thought being number one would feel good, but now I see it puts a target on your back and makes anything less than first seem like a failure.” Mickey could see that what he’d said was not helping, regardless of how true it was. “Look, what I mean is you’re handling this the best you can. The anxiety doesn’t mean you’re gonna turn out like your Mom. But you gotta realise you can’t control everything. Shit’s gonna hit the fan sometimes. Life’s gotta be more than hurdles.”

“Shit Mick, you should be a therapist. You’re so fucking right. Does this mean you’re not going out on another date with me?”

“That’s what you got out of that? Jesus Christ, Ian. I’ve got Thursday night free. Why don’t we just do pizza and chill?”

“At my dorm?” Ian asked, eyebrows raised.

“Yes, at your dorm. Unless you want Jerry to join the party?”

“Not sharing you with anyone, Mickey.”

“You ain’t got me, so not your call,” he said standing up, smirk on his face.

Ian followed suit, smirking right back at him. “Not yet, Milkovich. But soon. You didn’t want to rush this, but I can see you want it.”

“Fuck off, Gallagher. You want it just as much.”

“Then why we fucking waiting?”

Mickey didn’t know how to answer that.

*****

Ian had spent the afternoon chatting to his old coach and was feeling more positive about his future. It had been 12 days since his hamstring injury and rehab was progressing well—gaining some strength back and already jogging at a decent pace. But he carried this constant fear that always threatened to swallow him up. Years and years of competing were taking their toll on his mind and body. Every time he stood at that starting line it became harder to get fired up. It wasn’t always fun anymore. It felt more like a job. And yet all he ever dreamed of was becoming an Olympic athlete.

Mickey had been a godsend. He couldn’t thank the man enough for being there—not just helping him with his rehab sessions but for the friendship. He wanted Mickey, but he didn’t want to fuck it up. Could he have a relationship and stay focussed on his goals when he was already struggling? His instincts told him that if he ‘let go’ with Mickey, it would consume him. He had nothing to back up his assumption—having never been in love before—but he knew the way he felt about Mickey was different. He questioned whether he was ready for it. At nineteen, with years of sacrifice ahead of him, should he be thinking about love?

It was clear Mickey had a lot of baggage, had a fucked-up childhood, and was still learning to accept himself. He may have been all ‘fuck you’ on the outside, but Mickey was a teddy bear on the inside. Ian could see right through him, even if no one else could. There was a fragility to Mickey and Ian needed to be mindful of that, but every time he was around Mickey, his dick took over. He had never wanted someone more in his life. The kissing and teasing and subtle touches gave him butterflies, but after a month he wanted - no ached - for more.

Every night in bed he thrusted into his own hand, trying to imagine what is would feel like to be inside Mickey. He wondered what his dick would look like, how pink his hole was, how tight it would be. Would Mickey be quiet or loud while they fucked? Would Mickey ride him or prefer to be fucked from behind? Did he like it slow and deep, or hard and fast? Ian’s mind unravelled with all the unanswered questions. He fantasised about tying Mickey up, rimming him until he came untouched, and watching his own cum leak out of Mickey’s ass.

So deep in his thoughts, the knock at the door startled him. Mickey was fifteen minutes early and now he was going to answer the door with a raging boner. It was fucking hard to hide a nine-inch erect dick. Thinking of old lady tits and vag, he made his way over to the door, willing his erection down. “Who’s there?” he called out, trying to stifle his laugh.

“Who the fuck you think, Gallagher? Open the door, shithead. The pizza’s going cold.”

Ian swung the door open to find an exasperated Mickey standing there balancing two pizzas and a six pack of beer. “Shit Mick, I thought we were gonna order when you got here.” He relieved Mickey of the six pack and stepped back to let him in.

“Thought I’d save some time. Besides, I’m hungry as all fuck. Just did a 90-minute session in the gym. We shouldn’t be eating this shit. Well, I shouldn’t. I gotta compete in two days.”

“And I shouldn’t cos I’m not training enough to burn it off. But I want a day off.” Ian kept two beers out and put the rest in his mini fridge.

“Where you wanna eat Gallagher?” Mickey said, glancing around, pizza boxes still in his hands.

“Bed? Got the laptop set up to watch a movie.” They both climbed on the bed, and dug into the pizza, silent for a minute or two.

“You’re not making me watch a Van Damme movie, are you?” Mickey asked, before chugging down on his beer.

“No, I’m not. After our conversation last week, I picked a Segal movie. That’s a big fucking sacrifice, Milkovich. I wouldn’t do that for just anyone.” Ian could see the smirk on Mickey’s face, even if he was trying to hide it.

“You coming to watch the comp on Saturday or you sitting it out?”

“Course I’m coming. Want to cheer you on. You might get another PB and I don’t want to miss that.” The look Mickey gave him made his heart thud; it was soft and tentative and filled with an appreciation that can only come from a person who’s been ignored far too much. It made him wonder how Mickey became so good at athletics with his shitty upbringing. “Mick, you’ve never told me how you got into athletics. I mean, how does a South Side kid end up one of the best discus throwers in the country?”

“That’s a long fuckin’ story, but it comes down to my high school coach - Coach Anderson. At the start of freshman year we had this track and field day and I was being a dickhead throwing the shot put and discus around—nearly cracking peoples skulls open—yeah, I didn’t know how fuckin’ dangerous it was. Anyway, Coach must have seen some potential and kept me back for detention. My detention was to learn how to throw a discus and shot put. He got his measuring tape out and was frowning and shaking his head, and I didn’t know what the fuck was going on.”

Ian can’t stop smiling at Mickey and his very late introduction to track and field. How he had placed third at Nationals last year after only four years of high school coaching was beyond Ian. Mickey was a natural and fucking more talented than Ian had realised. “And you were already throwing big then? The very first time you tried it?”

“That’s what he told me. At first, I didn’t want to do it. Thought it was a waste of time—you know, fucked for life and all that. But he kept at me and at me. Then I competed for the school and I won, then I won state and I was fuckin’ hooked. I mean, I still tried to skip school and wasn’t doing my work, so Coach tutored me and a couple of times he tracked me down and hauled my ass back into class. He saved me, Ian. Would be in fuckin’ prison if it wasn’t for that man. Miss the old fucker too.”

“Hope I get to meet him one day. I’ll be thanking him—wouldn’t have met you otherwise.”

Mickey shook his head, “You’re so fuckin’ gay, Gallagher.”

“Oh really? I’m fuckin’ gay? Says the guy who blushes every time I kiss him.”

“Fuck off. Do not.”

And then they were wrestling on the bed; pizza boxes flying, laptop bouncing, all while they fought for dominance. Mickey was strong and had him pinned within a minute, and Ian really liked the view. Mickey had pinned his arms above his head and was straddling his hips. Ian’s cock hardened in seconds, and the look of lust that flashed across Mickey’s face was undeniable. They were both panting, watching each other, eyes dropping to eager lips, wanting mouths.

Mickey took him by surprise when he slowly rolled his hips, grinding down on his dick, his shaft lining up with Mickey’s ass crack. God damn, Mickey was going to be the end of him. When Mickey did it again, he moaned, unable to stop himself.

“You like that, huh? Mickey teased.

“Like it better if we were naked and my dick was deep inside your ass.”

Mickey groaned, “Fuck, Gallagher, you can’t say shit like that.”

“Kiss me,” he whispered.

Mickey leant forward, the anticipation almost killing him, and then their lips met, soft and sensual. The moment Mickey released his hands, Ian grabbed his ass and thrust up, licking into Mickey’s mouth, the taste sending his temperature rising. Grinding against each other, Ian slipped his hands down into Mickey’s sweats, getting his first feel of that glorious ass. He couldn’t help biting at Mickey’s bottom lip before sucking it into his mouth.

Wanting to take control, Ian rolled them, Mickey letting out a little gasp and then a chuckle. Peppering kisses down Mickey’s neck, he sat up between Mickey’s legs and pulled his shirt off, throwing it on the floor. He pushed Mickey’s tank up and swirled his tongue around each nipple until they were hard under his touch. Then he made his way downward - licking, sucking and kissing—the sound of Mickey’s heavy breathing music to his ears. “Lift,” he said, grabbing the sides of Mickey’s sweats.

Mickey obliged and he pulled them off and threw them to the floor. “Tank off too,” he said, running his hands up and down Mickey’s thick thighs. Fuck, they were hot. Mickey did as he was told, Ian’s eyes glued to the wet spot on Mickey’s boxers.

“Get your fuckin’ sweats off too,” Mickey demanded, sitting up on his elbows, eyebrows arched. Ian had them off in record time, then resettled between Mickey’s legs. He’d never taken so long to get to this point with someone, and he suddenly felt nervous as hell. Leaning forward, but keeping his eyes on Mickey, he rubbed his mouth against Mickey’s cock.

“Fuckin’ hell Ian, you’re such a tease.”

Ian didn’t need another invitation. He pulled Mickey’s boxers down, then lifted Mickey’s legs up in the air so he could get them all the way off. As soon as they were clear of Mickey’s feet, Mickey tried to lower his legs. “Not so fast,” he said, grabbing the backs of Mickey’s knees and pushing his legs towards his chest. “Oh Mickeeey,” he moaned, setting his eyes on that pretty pink hole. Ian leant forward and licked over Mickey’s hole, up his perineum, lapped at his balls then ran his tongue all the way up to the tip of his thick, veiny dick. Gathering the pre-cum on his tongue, he surged up and kissed Mickey, rutting against him, before getting back to business between those legs.

Grasping Mickey's dick with one hand, he circled his tongue around the head before swallowing him down.

"Fuck fuck fuck, Ian," Mickey groaned, reaching out and grabbing onto his hair.

Ian was so fucking turned on, he felt fifteen again. He bobbed up and down on Mickey's cock, taking him in further each time. Before long Mickey was trying to thrust up into his mouth, incoherent babble coming out of his mouth.

"Ian, I can't last, so fuckin' good. Gonna cum if you don't stop."

But Ian couldn't stop, he needed to hear Mickey cum, needed to taste him, wanted to give him pleasure. So he sped up, and sucked harder, while he pulled his own neglected dick out and jerked himself. Mickey cried out Ian's name when he came, and he moaned with pleasure as warm cum filled his mouth. Never before had he gotten so turned on by blowing someone. He gently pulled off as Mickey's release ended and sat up, still stroking his own leaking cock.

Mickey was still panting, face flush and eyes black. "Ian, your cock is so fuckin' hot. Cum on me. Come on, I want it."

Ian was so close, Mickey's dirty talk causing his balls to tighten. "Spread your legs for me, show me that pretty hole," he whined. Mickey pulled his knees back towards his chest and Ian came hard, aiming his cum at Mickey's hole. It was dirty and hot, and pleasure flooded his body. On instinct he leant forward, licking over Mickey's hole, spreading his cum and gathering some in his mouth.

"Let me taste you," Mickey whispered, voice low and needy.

Ian crawled up Mickey's body, laying so they were chest to chest and then licked into Mickey's open, waiting mouth. They kissed and kissed, Mickey's legs wrapping around him as they pulled each other closer. Ian didn't know what was happening between them, but he knew that was the best sexual experience he'd ever had—and he hadn't even fucked Mickey yet. Mickey was going to be his downfall, his undoing, his fucking kryptonite. And right now, he just wanted more.

Chapter End Notes

Please subscribe, user subscribe, kudos and leave me a comment!
I've had the shittiest week - which is why this chapter is a day late. And if you're reading CAPTIVE as well, then the next chapter will likely be between Tuesday and Thursday - sorry I can't be more definite! So my shitty week entailed me having to put my 19 year old cat to sleep. Worst f*king decision to make and I've cried myself out now. Choosing to end a life - even if she had no 'quality of life' left - still felt wrong. Hope I never have to do that again.

Take care everyone!
Rachael x
Here's to Sunday and getting out boys back!!!!

Rumours

Chapter Summary

Picking up the day after their pizza and movie date.

Chapter Notes

See end notes for warning! (or tags)

Ian's texts in ITALIC
Mickey's texts in BOLD

Hope you enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

As they walked upstairs to Ian's dorm, Mickey's head was still spinning from his previous night with Ian. Straight after they watched the movie, he had left, needing to be alone to process what had happened between them. He couldn't deny it was the best blowjob he'd ever had, but it was the kissing and cuddling afterwards that had scared the shit out of him. Mickey had never cuddled in bed with anyone and it felt good. Too good. In his past, anything good had been taken away from him. The simplest solution was to never have anything good, to avoid the disappointment of losing it. Athletics had been the one and only exception—and the fear of losing that had stressed him the fuck out until he arrived at college. Did he want Ian if it came with the risk of losing him?

They reached Ian's door and the redhead unlocked it, walked straight in and dumped his key and cell on the desk. Mickey stood at the door.

"Mick, what are ya doing? Come in," Ian said, sitting down on his bed and kicking off his shoes.

"Getting late, need to get to bed."

"Oh Mickey, my intention is to get you into bed."

Mickey smiled at the corny line as Ian got up and came to stand in front of him. "Gallagher, you know what I mean. I'm competing tomorrow. Need a good night's sleep."

Ian cupped his jaw, ran a thumb across his lips, then trailed fingers down his neck and chest before resting on his hip. "What you need is a good fuck." Ian was kissing him before he could answer, his mind suddenly unable to recall why it was important to get an early night. Mickey was vaguely aware Ian was turning him around, then backing him into the room before he could come to his senses. Ian's lips were addictive.

He pushed Ian away gently, "Come on, man. If you were competing tomorrow, your freckly ass would already be asleep in bed."

"Yeah, but Mickey, I wanna fuck you so bad. Haven't been able to think of anything else since last

night." Ian started kissing down his neck, pulling their bodies in close, squeezing his ass. "Want to be inside you," Ian whispered into his ear. Mickey moaned, tilting his head to the side as Ian licked, then sucked on his earlobe.

Distracted by people walking down the hall, they pulled apart. The door was still wide open, and two students looked in at them from across the hall.

"Hey Gallagher, different one every week. Fucking wish I was gay," the tall jock yelled out, then laughed.

"Fucking mind your own business, Bowman," Ian said, moving to the door and slamming it shut.

That was all it took for Mickey to know he had to head back to his dorm. The fact that Ian had always been a player had worried him from the beginning. Hearing that fucking jock confirm it was like throwing a bucket of cold water over him.

"Mick, he's full of shit. Well, that's not entirely true. I *was* fucking around a lot, but I haven't hooked up with anyone since I met you. Only interested in you." Ian took his hand, but Mickey avoided eye contact.

"All good, Gallagher. It's not like we're fuckin' boyfriends or anything. And I gotta get some sleep. Want to PB tomorrow. I'll see you on the bus in the morning."

Mickey opened the door and went to leave.

"Mickey, I want to be boyfriends. I think. If that's something you want?"

He hesitated, then turned, "Night, Gallagher." Heading down the hall, he knew Ian was watching him leave, but he resisted the urge to look back. Mickey had a lot to think about.

*****

Ian was standing on the fence line, as close to the discus cage as he could get, waiting for Mickey's final throw of the day. They were at Baylor Uni for this competition and Mickey had spent the entire 90-minute bus trip acting weird. And after last night, Ian wasn't at all surprised. That fucking jock Bowman had ruined their night. Mickey would have stayed, and they would have finally fucked, and everything would be fine. He was sure of it; Mickey had melted in his arms last night when they kissed.

To be honest, he didn't understand why Mickey cared so much about his past hook-ups. Going a month without sex—as in his cock up an ass—surely proved to Mickey that he was not the same person he was before. It proved Ian was willing to keep his dick in his pants for the right man. The more he thought about it, the more he wondered if neither of them were ready for a relationship. Why they couldn't just be fuck buddies, he didn't know. Well, he knew, because both of them had fucking feelings.

Two nights ago, after he'd blown Mickey, they had cuddled in bed and watched a movie. He had wanted nothing more than for Mickey to stay overnight—it felt right to have Mickey next to him in his bed. But Mickey had got up and headed home despite Ian's requests to stay. Ian let out a sigh —this was maybe too complicated when Nationals was only a few weeks away and his hamstring injury was hanging over his head.

It was Mickey's turn to throw and Ian yelled out, "Go Mick," while he watched him head into the

cage. Mickey didn't acknowledge him, only a small smile crossing Mickey's face, letting him know he had heard him. Ian was okay with that; he wanted Mickey to stay focussed and in the zone. The first two throws had been good, but so far no PB or world junior qualifying standard.

When the discus left Mickey's hand, Ian could see it was a good throw, but he couldn't tell how good. He watched Mickey's reaction while he waited for the officials to measure—the way Mickey hovered around the official told him it probably wasn't a PB, but very close. Once the distance was displayed, Ian knew it was another world junior qualifier, but 6 centimetres short of a PB. Mickey made his way over to the fence and Ian could see he was disappointed.

"Fuckin' 6 centimetres short of a PB," Mickey said, placing a hand to his forehead to block the sun from his eyes.

"You threw well, Mick. It's another world junior qualifying standard. You can't PB every week, you know that. You're on track. There's only that one thrower in California who's throwing as big as you."

"Yeah, I just never thought I could make it to Worlds and now it's actually possible, I'm fuckin' nervous."

"No one gets that more than I do," he said, placing his hand over Mickey's on the fence. "Just keep training, keep focussed and you'll get there."

"How are you feeling, anyway? Must be hard to be here and not competing."

"It's nice just watching you. Catching up with people and no pressure. But yeah, it feels weird. Trying not to think about it."

Mickey reaches up and pats his face. "Ian, rehab is going well. You're gonna make it back in time for Nationals. Trust me."

"Hope you're right. Hey, there's a campus party on tonight that's LGBT friendly. You want to go. We can celebrate your third qualifier."

"Gallagher, you know I don't do parties."

"Come on, it's fun. You need to get out and let loose. Come with me. Please."

"Alright, alright, but if it fuckin' sucks I'm leaving."

"Deal."

*****

Mickey had been at the party for over an hour and he could say with certainty that he fucking hated it. Ian was drunk, dancing like a fucking stripper—shirtless—while every fag on campus checked him out. Mickey didn't dance, so he was watching while he was drinking, the jealously raging up inside him. Why he agreed to come, he didn't know.

He was happy with his third world qualifier, but part of him thought he might have PB'd if he hadn't had a sleepless night thinking about Gallagher. What Ian had said—'I want to be boyfriends. I think'—had replayed on repeat all night. It told Mickey all he needed to know, and that was that Ian wasn't 100% sure he was ready to give up fucking around. Seeing all these guys

come onto Ian at this party made him realise he didn't want to share. It wasn't a feeling he had experienced before, and he didn't like it one fucking bit.

There was this one guy, a blonde dude named Jason who was a sprint hurdler, who had repeatedly approached Ian—whispering in his ear, giggling like a fucking girl and dancing way too close with his ass brushing against Ian's dick. Gallagher had been trying to deter the fuckwit, but Mickey had seen enough. Putting his empty beer bottle down, he made his way to the bathroom to take a piss before heading back to his dorm.

When he stepped out of the toilet, a guy from Baylor was standing at the bathroom sink, fixing his hair.

"Hey, are you the guy with Gallagher? Like his boyfriend?" the guy asked.

"The fuck's it to you?" he replied, pushing the guy out of the way so he could wash his hands.

"Chill, man. Just thought you should know your boyfriend's been hooking up with a friend of mine for the last few weeks."

Mickey slammed the guy up against the wall on instinct, anger swirling thick and fast in his gut. "The fuck you say?"

The guy held his hands up in surrender. "Don't shoot the messenger, just doing you a solid. Maybe you should step aside and let Jason have him."

Mickey stormed out of the bathroom and pushed through the crowd to find Jason's hands planted on Ian's chest as they danced together. He wanted to beat the shit out of both of them. Had Ian been fucking around behind his back this whole time? Had he lied straight to his face? Mickey knew he could lose his scholarship if he got into a fight on campus, and he wasn't giving that up for anyone. Not even Ian fucking Gallagher.

Pushing Jason hard, the dude crashed into some other people then fell to the floor.

"Mick, what the fuck are you doing?" Ian yelled over the music, his face twisted into a confused, drunk frown.

"What am I doing? What the fuck are you doing?" He poked Ian in the chest and stared him down.

"I'm dancing. Having fun."

"Is that what you fuckin' call it? Heard you been fuckin' that dude for weeks," he said, pointing to Jason, who was just getting up off the floor. "You wonder why I've been holding back? Cos you can't keep your dick in your fuckin' pants. And you fuckin' lied to me, man. I don't need this shit, you can just fuck right off." Mickey shoved Ian hard, the look of shock on Ian's face not deterring him from heading straight out the door and back to his dorm.

It wasn't until he was safely in his room, that he realised his hands were shaking and his heart was thumping hard in his chest. He felt like such a fucking idiot; he had told Ian so much shit about his past, his life. He had helped him with rehab. Was it all an act on Ian's behalf, cos it had felt real? Why had he broken all his rules and trusted Ian before he even really knew him?

Mickey sat down on his bed, grateful his roommate was at his girlfriends for the weekend. His phone had been vibrating in his pocket, so he took it out, knowing full well it was Ian. Five texts so far…

Mickey I don't know what's happening

I haven't been fucking Jason

Well I fucked him a couple of months ago but not since

I didn't lie I haven't fucked anyone since I met you

Mickey I'm coming over

Almost as if on cue, Ian banged on his door. "Mickey, open the door. We need to talk."

"Fuck off, Gallagher," he yelled.

"Mickey, we were just dancing. It doesn't mean shit. Why would you think I've been fucking him?"

Mickey got up off his bed and strode over to the door, whipping it open. "Cos people talk dipshit. I'm not telling you again, Gallagher. Fuck off." He slammed the door shut again and flung himself onto his bed.

Ian continued to bang and yell at the door for a full five minutes before Mickey's neighbours threatened to call campus security. Mickey didn't say another word. He was fucking done.

*****

A week had passed since the party from hell, and Ian still hadn't decided if he was angry or devastated. His rehab was almost complete, spending longer sessions on the track and in the gym trying to get his fitness and strength back in time for Nationals. But his thoughts were never far from Mickey. He had tried day in and day out to get Mickey to talk to him, to listen, but to no avail. Mickey was being the most stubborn fuck on the planet, and it pissed him off more than words could explain.

Ian had interrogated - and threatened - Jason several times, trying to figure out why Mickey believed he was fucking around behind his back. Jason was claiming he had no idea and had never spoken to Mickey. He had sent about a hundred texts to Mickey and left about 20 voicemails, of which Mickey had ignored them all.

The worst days were when they were both at the track. Mickey had gotten his thrower teammates in on the act of pretending Ian was invisible, so every time he approached Mickey, they would all make a big joke of it. It was fucking juvenile, and Ian couldn't understand Mickey's refusal to discuss what happened and try to work it out.

On Sunday night he was feeling lonely. Anxiety about his hamstring re-tearing at Nationals was sending him crazy, and he wanted Mickey. He had come to rely on Mickey so much so quickly—and he missed the friendship. He picked up his cell and tapped out a message…

Mickey, please answer me. I need you. I don't think I can do this without you!!

As a tear ran down his face, his phone vibrated. When he saw it was from Mickey, the tears started rolling in earnest.

Gallagher, you should have thought of that before you started hooking up with other dudes

and lying about it to my fucking face

Ian read the message twice as he wiped at his face. It wasn't the message he was hoping for, but part of him was happy that Mickey had even answered. He saw it as progress.

Mick, I've never lied to you. I don't know where you got this idea from. If we could just talk, I'm sure we can get to the truth. Please, Mickey!

Watching his phone for the next ten minutes, he prayed for a response. When none came through, he gave up and climbed into bed. He thought of kissing Mickey, not wanting to forget how it felt, not that he ever could.

*****

It had been two weeks since the party and Mickey felt like an overdramatic dick. From his hidden vantage point, he could see Ian training on the track, but Ian couldn't see him. It wasn't the first time he had watched Ian train; the way the stress radiated off the hurdler had Mickey worried.

Maybe Mickey had overreacted to what happened that night? He hadn't even given Ian a chance to explain himself and now he was backed into a corner not knowing how to fix things. Loyalty and trust meant a lot to him—he couldn't have a relationship, or even a friendship, without it. He'd also let his insecurities about not being good enough factor into the situation. Because the truth was, he couldn't understand why Ian would want him—not in any real or permanent sort of way. Ian was a minor celebrity in the athletics world. Girls loved spending time with him, and gay men lined up for him. Ian could have his pick, so why would he choose him? On top of that, Mickey didn't like how it felt to want someone. He didn't want to be in a position to need anyone.

He watched Ian practice his 'start,' knocking down the second hurdle. Observing Ian's shoulders collapse forward and his head fall down was hard to see. A couple of female sprinters blocked his line of sight, and he was about to tell them to move when he overheard Ian's name.

"You think Ian is going to make it back in time for Nationals," the tall brunette asked.

"Think it will be touch and go. I spoke to him yesterday and he seemed stressed out. I heard he's upset about his boyfriend," her blonde friend replied.

Mickey couldn't believe his personal life was now the subject of campus gossip. No wonder he didn't want to deal with any of this shit.

"Who's his boyfriend?"

"Well, it was that discus thrower - Mickey I think his name is. But the rumour going around is that they split up because Ian was cheating. Some incident at a party a couple of weeks ago involving Jason Worthington."

A third girl appeared out of nowhere to join in the conversation, "Are you guys talking about Ian and what that asshole from Baylor did?"

"What asshole from Baylor? What have you heard Jacqui?" the brunette asked.

"I heard that the 400 hurdler from Baylor—his name is Tyrell Jackson—is super jealous of Ian and told the boyfriend that Ian was cheating on him. He's been bragging about it and saying he's put Ian off his game," Jacqui replied.

“What a prick. And they say girls are bitches. Come on, lets head out and grab some dinner.”

Mickey was frozen on the spot. If this was true, then Ian had been honest with him the entire time. Fuck, what had he done?

*****

Ian had just finished up his gym session when his mind started to spiral out of control. There were only five days until Nationals, and he knew he wasn’t ready. The rules were clear, he had to place first or second for a guaranteed place on the US team. In normal circumstances no one could beat him, but he was running sub-par times. It was possible he would come second or even third. What if his hamstring gave out again and he didn’t even finish the race? What if he false started with all the nerves and was disqualified? What if he crashed into a hurdle? What if he fucked up his steps between the hurdles? What if? What if?

Stripping off his clothes, he headed into the showers, grateful that they were empty, and he could be alone with his thoughts. He had all but given up on Mickey. Turning the water on, he made it as hot as his body could stand before stepping under it. Being at college, away from his family and his coach, was much harder than he imagined. He felt untethered and out of control. Alone. When he met Mickey, he thought they would always be in each other’s lives—it just felt right.

As he soaped up his body, his heart raced, and his breathing became laboured. Fucking hell, he didn’t want to have a panic attack. Tears welled up in his eyes as his thoughts overran him; he couldn’t breathe. Leaning against the shower wall, he tried to hold himself up, tried to brace for it. He gasped for breath, his body shaking as his legs collapsed under him. Trying to pull himself out of it, he repeated, ‘you’re not going to die, you’re not going to die, you’re ok, breathe, breathe.’

And then he thought he heard Mickey’s voice. Couldn’t be. Mickey hated him.

“Ian, Ian, are you okay?”

An arm wrapped around his shoulders.

“Ian, are you having a panic attack?”

He turned his head, and it was Mickey, crouched beside him, scared blue eyes looking at him. Mickey was wet. Why was Mickey in wet clothes?

“Breathe in with me Ian, one two three four, and out, one two three four.”

Mickey was talking to him. He reached out and grabbed Mickey’s hand and held on tight. Breathing in, one two three four, and out, one two three four.

“You’re doing great. Keep it up. Keep breathing.”

Mickey has such a beautiful face. He had missed it so much.

“That’s it. Do you think you can stand up? Come on, I’ll help you.”

With Mickey helping him it was easier. He didn’t want Mickey to leave. “Mickey, I didn’t lie to you. I swear to god I didn’t fuck Jason or anyone.”

“I know. I fucked up. I should have let you explain. I got a fuckin’ temper. But what’s going on?

Why are you panicking?"

"Mick, I'm not ready for Nationals. Just fucking scared. Scared I'm gonna lose everything I've worked for." He couldn't stop it, the tears falling freely.

Mickey pulled him into a hug, one hand wrapped around his waist and the other around his neck. He buried his face into the crook of Mickey's neck and let the man sway them gently under the water. Mickey was fully dressed, holding him naked and whispering, 'it will be okay, we'll get through it, I got you.' Ian was afraid - afraid to have this and afraid not to. Mickey was making him feel things he'd never felt before. Mickey was pulling his focus from the one thing he prioritised above all else. Clinging ever more tightly onto Mickey, he wondered if he could have both.

Chapter End Notes

WARNING FOR THIS CHAPTER: PANIC ATTACK

Apologies for not sticking with my posting schedule - life is challenging for me right now.
I am aiming to have another chapter of Captive up before xmas.

Hope you enjoyed this chapter - please comment, kudos and subscribe.
If you haven't checkout out my xmas fic please do - "Mickey, you've been a very naughty boy!"
Take care!
Rachael x

Nationals!

Chapter Summary

Picking up after Ian's panic attack in the showers.

Chapter Notes

I edited this while very tired - so I apologize in advance for more mistakes than normal!!

Couple of phrases that might read weird...
The 'front straight' is the section of the track where they run the 100m sprint or the last 100m of any race!
The 'run out' in a hurdle race is the last part of the race once you have cleared the last hurdle.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Mickey had taken Ian back to his dorm room after the panic attack, worried he might have another one, but also hoping they could talk. Ian was sitting on the bed while Mickey took a seat on Ian's desk chair, wanting to keep his distance until he knew where they stood with each other. "Ian, tell me what's happening with your hammy? You've been training on it." Ian stared off out the window for a few seconds before looking back at him.

"Physio says it's okay. Still feel imbalanced, though. Worried it's gonna tear again in competition. But…fuck..." Ian paused, sighing wearily. "Mick, I've lost too much fitness. There's no fucking way I can get close to my PB at Nationals. I'll be lucky if I can place."

Mickey had been fortunate with injuries. So far, he had only had a minor strain in his shoulder. His coach told him it was because he hadn't been throwing all that long and eventually it would happen to him too. But at the present time, he didn't have any experience with what Ian was dealing with. Mickey stood up and joined Ian on the bed, still keeping space between them. "Ian, you gotta stop stressing bout shit that may not happen. If you keep thinking it's going to tear, then that's what will happen. And as for your fitness, you can only give it your all on the day. Worst-case scenario, you won't go to Worlds this year but man, you *are* going to the Olympics one day. I fuckin' know that Ian. You'll be up on that podium one day winning Olympic gold."

"I missed you," Ian said, done with talking athletics. "But I'm also pissed you didn't let me explain."

"I missed you, too. As I said, I got a fuckin' temper. I'm sorry."

"You gonna tell me what changed your mind? Or are you only here cos I had a panic attack?"

"I realised bout a week ago I fucked up, but I didn't know what to do about it. Then I found out that prick from Baylor lied to me just to fuck with you."

Ian's brows knitted into a frown. "What prick from Baylor? What the fuck are you talking about?"

"His name is Tyrell Jackson. He told me at the party you had been hooking up with Jason for weeks. Now the fuckwit is bragging about how he split us up and messed with your head for Nationals." Ian's face had grown redder with each word as anger bubbled to the surface.

"Are you fucking serious?" Ian asked, standing up and putting his hands on his hips. "And you believed that prick? He's always been jealous of me, that motherfucking piece of shit. I'm gonna kick his fucking ass."

Mickey stood up and placed his hands on Ian's shoulders. "Ian, you're not gonna kick anyone's ass cos you could lose your scholarship or get injured. We'll find some other way to teach the son of a bitch a lesson. And, yeah, I was a dipshit for believing him. Now sit down." Ian dropped back down onto the bed and Mickey followed suit. He knew he needed to explain himself but didn't know how to put it into words. "Look Ian. When I was growing up anything good came my way just got fucked up. I don't trust easy and I don't like, you know, needing anybody. I don't know what's going on here, between us, but if we start banging then…" Mickey stood up and walked across the room, shocked at what he had almost said.

"Mick, what are you saying? I know you're uncomfortable with how many guys I've fucked. But I can be exclusive. Is that what you want?"

"You ever been exclusive before?" he asked, turning around to face Ian again.

"No, but it doesn't mean I can't be. If we're being honest here, my biggest fear is this," Ian motioned between the two of them, "is gonna distract me from my athletic goals."

"Yeah ok. Whatever man," he said, heading for the door.

Ian jumped up off the bed and intercepted him, grabbing him by the wrist. "Don't get fucking mad, Mick. Listen, I'm trying to be honest here. You think I'm saying you don't mean enough to me, but it's the exact opposite. I've never felt like this about anyone before, and it scares the shit out of me. If we're having arguments or fucking all night long, it will affect me on the track."

"So what do you wanna do?"

"I think we should focus on Nationals—it's only 5 days away—and then after Nationals we see if we're ready to take this to the next level. And you have my word, I won't be hooking up with anyone. But just friends for now."

Mickey needed to think more about this entire conversation but what Ian was suggesting sounded like the best short-term solution—he too, had Nationals to focus on. "Okay."

Ian pulled him into a hug, and it felt good. "Thanks for being there for me, Mick." When Ian pressed a kiss to his neck, goosebumps erupted over his skin. He knew they could never just be friends; the sexual attraction was all-consuming. Stepping away, he said, "I'm going to head out. Meet me at the track tomorrow morning?"

"For sure. Are we cool?" Ian asked, concern written all over his face.

"Yeah. We both need time to think about what we want, and Nationals is the priority right now." He patted Ian on the cheek, "Get some rest. I'll see you tomorrow."

Ian walked him to the door, and they said their goodbyes. As Mickey headed back to his own dorm, he replayed over what Ian said. If he understood correctly, Ian told him he had feelings for

him, serious feelings, and he was afraid of them as Mickey was of his. Things weren't by any means settled, but for the first time since the party, he felt himself relax.

*****

Ian was on edge. They had arrived in Oregon for Nationals yesterday, and his hurdles round one race was tomorrow morning. His assigned roommate was shitting him up the wall, so he was tracking down a guy named Jayden in an attempt to solve the problem.

"Hey, Jayden you got a minute," he asked the burly shot putter when he spotted him.

"Yeah Gallagher, what's up?"

"I need to ask a huge favour and you can name your price. I need to switch rooms with you."

Jayden frowned at him. "We aren't supposed to do that."

"I know I know, but I don't get along with my roommate. It's Jimmy Bader."

"Hey, Jimmy's funny. Okay, so name my price? Um...ah…oh I know. You're friends with Chantelle Carson, aren't you? If you can introduce us and put in a good word for me, you got a deal."

"Easy, consider it done."

Thirty minutes later Ian was unpacking his bags in his new room, feeling a thousand times less anxious than he was before, when the door opened, and his new roommate walked in. Before he could even turn around, he heard a chuckle.

"Gallagher, how the fuck did you pull this off?"

"Well Mick, was pretty easy actually," he said, walking over and kissing Mickey on the cheek. "Jayden has the hots for Chantelle, so I just have to introduce them and tell Chantelle to give him a chance. Maybe I'll end up being a matchmaker."

Since their talk four days ago they had settled into a groove somewhere between friends and boyfriends—they hugged, held hands, and pecked each other on the lips, but that was as far as it went. For now.

Mickey talked him down every time he got too anxious, and he was feeling a little more positive about racing. He hoped he was supporting Mickey just as much—Mickey deserved to win the National title and go to World Juniors, and Ian was his number one fan. Mickey's discus was scheduled for tomorrow afternoon, so fortunately there weren't any clashes with their events.

Mickey sat down on his bed as Ian continued to unpack. "Well, I gotta admit, you're a lot prettier than Jayden. Just no getting handsy tonight, we both need our sleep."

Ian laughed, shaking his head at Mickey. "So you think I'm pretty, huh?"

"Is that the only part of what I said that you heard?"

"It was the part I liked. But I agree, we need to sleep. I just need to be here with you, Mick. You

keep me calm. Couldn't relax with that fuckhead Jimmy."

"I'm glad you're here too."

*

COMPETITON DAY ONE: 400 HURDLE HEATS / DISCUS

Ian couldn't look up into the stands. He knew Mickey was watching; was seated about halfway up and on the finish line. Mickey had been his anchor all morning—even coming out onto the warmup track, despite his coach's objections. But now that he was about to compete, and he needed to focus on his objective and his race plan. His coach advised him to aim for second place in this heat—guaranteeing him a place in the final but not using up the energy he would need for tomorrow's race. The race that mattered. Still, Ian was too nervous, and he knew that might mean his adrenaline would work against him. Trying to stop it flowing out of him before the race began, was proving to be an overwhelming battle.

As the marshal blew his whistle, he took a few deep breaths, followed by a few tuck jumps to get his muscles firing, then took his position in the blocks.

"Set."

He breathed in and lifted up.

At the sound of the gun his body took over, and he did what he was trained to do, muscle memory kicking in. When he reached the two hundred metre mark, he became aware of his body fatiguing. At the three hundred metre mark, his speed had dropped off more than it should. He had drawn lane seven, and any lane past four he disliked because it was hard to gauge where the athletes in lanes one, two and three were tracking until the last hundred metres of the race.

As he headed down the straight towards the finish line, the athlete in lane one moved past him. He was in second place, and he needed to hold on to it to guarantee his place in the final. Knowing this other hurdler normally couldn't beat him made him fight harder, and he reached deep inside, fighting his aching body as he threw himself over the last hurdle. The athlete in lane one clipped his hurdle, and that gave Ian the chance to pull back in front. When he crossed the finish line, he bent over and gasped for air. He felt tears prickle at his eyes. It had been years since he had to fight to win, and he remembered all too well why he fucking hated it.

Looking up at the board, he felt sick when he saw his time—51.23. He hadn't run that slow in almost two years. His PB was 49.05 for fuck's sake. The next race was about to start, and he wanted to watch it, but the officials were ushering them off. The second heat had his main competition—a guy named Aaron Brown—and Ian needed to know how he performed in his heat.

"Ian. Ian!"

He spotted Mickey immediately, waving his arms so Ian could find him in the crowd around the fence. "Meet me outside the call room," he yelled, following the other athletes back down under the stadium.

Once he changed back into his sweats, he headed out to Mickey, and to find out what time Aaron Brown ran in his heat. He felt like shit and needed to do a cool down. Opening the door, he stepped out into the sun, a hesitant Mickey standing before him.

“What did Aaron run?” he asked.

“50.45.”

“Fuck! Who was the next fastest qualifier?”

“You were, then the dude that came second in your heat. Ian, you gotta stay calm. Aaron went fucking hard for a heat. Too hard.”

“Yeah, and so did I. Couldn’t swallow my fucking pride and come in second like my coach told me to. Body feels fucked.”

Mickey pulled him into a hug, then stepped back holding him by the shoulders. “Go do your cool down. See physio if you need to and head back to the room to rest. You know the deal—eat something, hydrate—your body will recover for tomorrow.”

Ian realised what a selfish prick he was being. “Mick, I’m sorry. You don’t need to hear all this shit. It must almost be time for you to warm up. I’ll do my cool down, but then I’m staying to watch you. Wouldn’t fucking miss it for anything.”

“Okay, well let’s head out to the warmup track. But you don’t need to stay for me, go rest.”

“Not doing that, Mick. You’ve been here all morning supporting me when you could have been back at the room resting. Let’s go, so you’re not late.”

******

Mickey was handling his nerves well. Having Ian to worry about helped him—stopping him from focusing on every miniscule detail. The wind was not on his side, nor any of the throwers today, so a PB was likely out of the question. His goal was to place first or second. He had three world junior qualifiers under his belt, and that was all he needed for automatic selection alongside a first or second.

The first three throws had been completed and they were now on their second throws in the final round with only eight competitors remaining. Mickey was sitting in second place, only four centimetres behind the thrower from California. The athlete in third didn’t appear to be a threat. Although he wasn’t counting his chickens before they hatched.

Ian was at the fence alongside Mickey’s coach. Every time Mickey had taken a walk over to Coach Garcia for feedback, Ian had given him a quick squeeze on his shoulder or arm and provided words of encouragement. Since he was yet to develop a bond with his new coach having Ian there meant a lot.

Taking his place in the throwing cage, he glanced back at Ian before taking his stance. This was his second last throw of the day. The moment the discus left his hand he knew it was good. When it hit the ground, he heard Ian cheering. The distance came up on the board and he had his fourth world qualifier. He was also in first place with a lead of seven centimetres.

As he sat waiting for the final round of throws to start, the nerves kicked up a notch. The Californian thrower would take his final throw first—if he threw further, then Mickey would have only one throw left to get back into first place. If the guy didn’t throw further, then Mickey would take the title without even having to throw a final time. The waiting was killing him.

When it was time for the Californian athlete to take his throw, Mickey walked over to the fence. He needed Gallagher's support. "Gallagher, I can't fuckin' watch," he said, reaching out for Ian's hand and keeping his back turned to the discus cage.

"Then don't, I'll watch for you."

Mickey waited, eyes on Ian as Ian watched the discus cage.

"Mickey, Mickey, fuck, I don't think it was good enough to beat your distance," Ian said, excitement building in his voice.

Mickey turned around and located the officials measuring. "Fuck, it's close though. Shit. Why are they so slow to put it up on the fuckin' board?"

And then it was up. And Mickey had won. He was an under 20 National Champion and he was going to World Juniors. Ian was hugging him over the fence and congratulating him, but all he could think about was Terry. Fuck you, Terry! I fucking made something of myself, he repeated in his head.

Pulling away from Ian, he wiped the single tear that had escaped and then he kissed Ian hard on the lips. He didn't give a flying fuck who saw because he was a god damn national champion, and he was going overseas for the first time in his life and now he just needed Ian by his side. When he released Ian from his tight hold, he was smiling like a dork.

"Mickey, you got your final throw to do. Get your ass over there," Ian said, slapping him on the bum.

An hour later he was standing on the podium receiving his medal. Ian was filming it to send to Mandy and his old high school coach. Fuck, maybe he would send it to Terry too.

*****

Ian was so fucking happy for Mickey, but it still wasn't enough to distract him from his own fears and anxiety about his race tomorrow. Plus, his hamstring felt tight even after seeing the team physio. Once they arrived back at their room, he had taken an ice bath and there wasn't much else he could do other than eat, hydrate and get a good sleep. Although he knew falling asleep with this much anxiety was going to be a challenge.

"Mickey, are you heading out to celebrate your win?" he asked, picking up the room service menu.

"Fuck no, planned on staying here with you."

"You don't have to stay with me, Mick. Go out, drink and have fun. You earned it."

Mickey approached him, taking the menu out of his hands. "I'm waiting for you, Gallagher. We'll celebrate together tomorrow night after you win. Tonight, this is right where I wanna be."

*

By the time they had finished eating, Ian's anxiety was getting out of control. It always started the same way—his thoughts becoming less logical as he imagined everything that could go wrong, and not just in the race but his entire life. Then his heart would race, and he would get dizzy and feel nauseous.

“Ian, look at me. What’s going on in the pretty little head of yours?”

“I’m sorry, Mick. I’m not much company tonight.”

“That’s not what I asked. Tell me. I got some experience dealing with stress.”

Ian leant forward, putting his elbows on the table and his face in his hands. “Just my fucking anxiety. And my hammy is still tight. In fact, my whole body feels sore.”

Mickey stood up and grabbed him by the wrist. “Come on, strip off and get on the bed. I’ll give you a massage and then you go straight to sleep.”

He let Mickey lead him over to the bed. “I don’t have any massage oil.”

“I do. Strip down to your boxers and I’ll grab it from the bathroom.”

Ian wasn’t sure if Mickey massaging him was going to relax him or get him revved up. But his hammy needed it, so he stripped off and laid face down on his bed.

Mickey returned and placed the bottle on the nightstand. “You mind if I strip off too, so I don’t get oil on my clothes?”

Ian lifted his head to catch a glimpse at Mickey. “Nah, go for it,” he said, wondering how hands-on this massage was going to be.

Ten seconds later Mickey was straddling his lower back—facing his feet—and applying long, deep strokes to his injured hamstring. It was unconventional, but it felt good. Once Mickey had worked both hamstrings, he jumped off the bed and attended to his calves and feet. Ian felt incredibly relaxed—it was just the right amount of pressure to ease the aches without going too deep and needing recovery time.

“How you feeling, Gallagher? Doing a lot of moaning there.”

“Oh shit, sorry Mick. Didn’t realise I was moaning. It’s perfect.”

“You moaning is perfect.”

“Mick, don’t say that unless you want to get fucked hard and fast.”

“Normally I wouldn’t say no to an offer like that, but you need to conserve your energy for tomorrow.”

Mickey climbed back on, straddling his ass, and began massaging his back. Ian’s entire body tingled with pleasure. “Mickey, you could be a professional masseuse,” he mumbled into the mattress. Ian was almost asleep when he felt his boxers being tugged down, Mickey’s fingers massaging into the top of his ass. Fuck, his cock hardened immediately.

“Ian, lift up and let me take these off. It’ll make it easier.”

Ian lifted his pelvis and bit down on his lip to stop himself from groaning as Mickey dragged his boxers off. They weren’t even doing anything, and Ian was so fucking horny and relaxed at the same time. It was heaven. Mickey began kneading into his ass cheeks as his dick throbbed against the duvet.

Mickey paused for a second and then Ian felt massage oil dribble over his ass and down his crack. Holy shit. Ian had bottomed a few times and while it wasn’t his preferred position, he didn’t mind

a bit of ass play. As a top he rarely got rimmed, but when he did, he fucking loved it. So Mickey lavishing attention on his ass was more than welcome.

“You ever bottom before, Gallagher?” Mickey asked, his voice thick with arousal.

“A few times. Why? You gonna fuck me, Mick?”

“You like your ass being played with?” Mickey was now massaging in outward circles. Ian knew his hole would be on full display and he rolled his hips down into the mattress to get some relief. “I’ll take that as a yes then,” Mickey said, and Ian could tell Mickey was smiling.

The moment Mickey’s finger started massaging around his rim while his other hand stroked softly up and down his back, Ian moaned contentedly.

“Just relax, Ian. Let me take care of you. You’ll sleep like a baby.”

“Mickeeeey,” he sighed, rolling his hips ever so slowly, creating the most delicious friction on his dick.

Ian heard the oil bottle open again and then a single finger pushed inside him; it was done so slowly and carefully that he only felt pleasure. Mickey began sliding his finger in and out at a languid place, nudging his legs wider apart and gently stroking his body with the other hand. Ian felt like he was having a sex dream—not feeling fully awake, his body pliable and open.

By the time Mickey found his prostate and lavished it with attention, his cock was leaking pre-cum and his balls were tightening. He had never cum untouched, but now it seemed possible. Moaning like a bitch in heat, he bent his knees up at the sides to get some traction and began rutting his dick into the mattress. “Oh fuck, Mickey. Gonna cum.”

“Ian, you look so hot. Got me wishing I was under you. Letting you fuck deep into my ass.”

And that was it. He came so fucking hard his vision went black. Never having had a prostate orgasm before, he suddenly knew what all the fuss was about—it spread throughout his body, causing him to shudder and shake as this deep sense of bliss rolled over him. Mickey gently pulled his finger out and Ian closed his eyes, a smile spreading across his face.

A few minutes later, Mick was wiping him down with a warm washcloth and towelling him dry. “Roll over,” Mickey said. Mickey cleaned up his softening dick and then wiped the cum off the duvet. “Stand up and let’s get you into bed.”

“You want me to return the favour?” he asked as he stood up.

Mickey pulled the duvet back for him. “Fuck no, you need to sleep now. Get in.” He climbed into bed and Mickey covered him up.

“One kiss, Mick,” he said, reaching out and grabbing Mickey’s hand and pulling him down. Ian kissed Mickey gently, sucking on his lower lip before Mickey pulled away.

“Sleep Gallagher.”

“I feel good. Thanks Mick,” he said, turning onto his side as Mickey turned out the light and wandered towards the bathroom. With no anxiety, sleep came instantly.

*****

COMPETITION DAY 2: 400M HURDLE FINAL

Mickey was extremely nervous sitting in the stands waiting for Ian's final to start. More nervous than when he competed himself, and he didn't know what that meant. Ian was making him feel open and vulnerable - like he didn't have control of his own emotions anymore.

Last night when he fingered Ian to orgasm, he had almost cum without touching himself. What shocked him was being so aroused by giving someone else pleasure. All his sexual encounters with other men had been about him getting his rocks off—he hadn't given two fucks if the other dude enjoyed it and certainly didn't get turned on by watching them come undone.

Ian had woken up happy and refreshed after a good night's sleep, and that was all that mattered. Mickey, on the other hand, had barely slept; slipping twice into the bathroom to jerk off to thoughts of Ian's ass clenching around his finger as he came like a motherfucker. Ian's moans of ecstasy popped into his head while he sat in the stadium, and he forced himself to refocus on what was important—getting Ian to Worlds.

Mickey had left Ian at the call room entrance with a hug, and a lingering-but chaste—kiss, and now thirty minutes later the marshal blew his whistle to start the race. Mickey thought he might throw up. In discus, you got three chances to get in a good throw to make it to the final and then another three in the final. Track events were far more ruthless—you fucked up in the final and there was no second chance.

Ian was in lane four and Aaron, his main competition, was in lane five as the two fastest qualifiers. Mickey was holding his breath, wondering how he was going to survive the next fifty seconds.

"Set."

The gun fired and then a second one went off.

"Fuck!" he yelled, throwing his hands up to his head. The surrounding people turned and frowned, but he didn't give a shit what they thought. Someone had false-started and he was worried it was Ian. It looked like he might have jumped the gun. *Fuck.* A false start meant disqualification. The official walked across the lanes with the red card and Mickey's heart pounded out of his chest.

When the official stopped behind the athlete in lane three, Mickey let out the breath he was holding, followed by, "Jesus fucking thank Christ."

It took another full minute or more before the marshal blew the whistle again. Mickey didn't think he could be the boyfriend of a track athlete—this was fucking torture on the nerves.

"Set."

The gun fired and Mickey watched Ian fly out of the blocks. He looked strong and determined, and he cleared the first hurdle well. Mickey distracted himself by counting Ian's steps between the hurdles—knowing the exact number. When they rounded the final bend at the 300-metre mark and started down the front straight, Ian and Aaron were side by side. Since Mickey had met Ian, he had learnt a lot about 400 hurdles and knew that the final 80 metres was a battle of endurance, the athletes having nothing left to give and almost throwing themselves over those last couple of hurdles.

As they approached the last hurdle, Mickey could see Ian was in pain—the lactic build up intense and unrelenting. Mickey's stomach clenched with nerves and he prayed Ian would have the

strength to get over that last hurdle. He made it, and Mickey breathed out with relief, but then Aaron pulled ahead in the run out, and Mickey's heart ached for Ian. He would get second place and he would get selected to go to Worlds, but Mickey knew how devastated Ian would be. Devastated for coming in second place, devastated with his time. Ian would be terrified of the future and if he could make it back to full fitness before Worlds. Mickey understood only too well.

Mickey made his way down out of the stands, trying to keep his eye on Ian the entire time. Ian was over to the side, squatting down, head hung low and gasping for air. Mickey wanted to hold him, but he didn't know if anything could take away the disappointment. Nevertheless, he would try.

*****

Ian didn't want to see Mickey. He felt embarrassed. His ego had taken a bashing—that's what happened when you went two years and never lost a single finals race. This morning he was still the reigning National champion, and this afternoon he was not. He was second best.

As he made his way back to the call room to get changed and prepare for the medal ceremony, he tried to remind himself of the positives—he was going to Worlds and he would have time to redeem himself. If he trained hard enough, he could get back to where he was. Maybe even get close to the under 20 world record.

When he pulled his sweats out of his bag, he heard his phone vibrating. Picking it up, he checked his messages…

Dad: Don't be disappointed, Ian. I watched the live stream and you hurdled well for someone who is still recovering from an injury. Congrats on Worlds! Call me when you're ready to talk. Love you. Dad

Mick: Here if you wanna talk. You raced well and improved your time from yesterday. You're going to Worlds.

Coach Smythe: Ian, I know you are being too hard on yourself right now but let it go! Focus on the future—your goal was always to win Worlds. Be proud of yourself. I'll call tomorrow to go over a few things that will help. Go and celebrate. Don't give everyone the chin—you'll look like a sore loser! Missed being there while you raced but glad they livestreamed it. Proud of you.

Ian sat down and read his old coach's text again. He missed him so much. But he was right as always—Ian needed to put a smile on his face and stop focussing on the negatives. He was going to Worlds, and that was more important than Nationals. Everyone knew he was coming back from an injury. His phone buzzed again…

Mick: I'm outside the call room. I understand if you want to be alone. Just tell me what to do, Gallagher.

Ian hurriedly put his things away and headed for the door, pushing out into the sunshine and searching for Mickey. And there he was, concerned blue eyes lifting up from his phone. He moved forward and dropped his bag at Mickey's feet, then took Mickey in his arms and kissed him. To his surprise, Mickey kissed him straight back, opening up and welcoming his tongue into his mouth.

When he pulled away breathless, he said, "We're going to Worlds." The smile on Mickey's face was all he needed.

*

A few hours later, after medal presentation, they were back in their room, lying on their respective beds.

“So are you okay about coming second? And with your time? You can tell me the truth. I won’t judge man, I get it.”

“I was fucking gutted straight after the race. My pride had been wounded and I saw those fuckheads talking about me they were happy that I lost. But if I can win Worlds, then coming second at Nationals won’t mean shit anymore. So yeah, I’m both happy and sad in a way.”

“Just point out the fuckheads and I’ll deal with them, Gallagher. You’re not race fit right now, and that’s to be expected after your injury. But you will be fit by Worlds, and then you can tell them all to fuck right off.”

Ian sat up, chuckling at Mickey’s revengeful streak. He knew Mickey was a loyal person; could already tell by how Mickey looked out for him. It felt good. “You ready to go out and party? Celebrate your National title.”

Mickey sat up too, eyes scanning over Ian’s face before settling back on his eyes. “You know, I think I’d rather a quiet night in. But you go if you want.”

“Really? You don’t want to go out? Cos I’d rather stay in too. Just the two of us?” Ian felt the atmosphere change and his heart quickened.

“Yeah, I’d like that, Gallagher. Just the two of us.”

“Come here,” he said, beckoning Mickey over.

Mickey stood up and sauntered forward, then climbed onto his lap, straddling him and pressing his ass down. Ian wrapped his arms around Mickey’s waist and Mickey threaded his hands behind his neck. Holy fuck, Ian thought, as his cock swelled under Mickey’s ass.

“Nationals is over, Gallagher,” Mickey said, grinding down in his lap.

Ian moaned as he stroked up Mickey’s back. “It is. And I don’t want to wait any longer. I fucking need you, Mick.”

“Ian,” Mickey sighed.

Ian pushed his cock up into Mickey’s ass. “Tell me what you want, Mickey.”

Mickey was biting down on his own lip and staring at Ian’s mouth. “I want you inside me, Ian. Want you to fuck me all night.”

And then Mickey’s lips came crashing onto his own, the force throwing him back onto the bed as Mickey licked aggressively into his mouth.

Chapter End Notes

** Okay so don't kill me for ending this chapter where I did - the next chapter will continue straight on and be their night together! I definitely won't be skipping over this very important event!!

** Next chapter will hopefully be next Tuesday or Wednesday. Captive next chapter will hopefully be this weekend - targeting for Saturday at this stage

** I hope you enjoyed this chapter - please KUDOS, SUBSCRIBE AND COMMENT - I really appreciate it!!
Hope everyone had a lovely Christmas and please stay safe while celebrating New Years!
I had my complaints about the HOS episode but the mutual ILY's scene blew my mind and made me forget the bad parts! LOL! And the outtakes were adorable - glad we've got that extra kiss!
Rachael xx

A leap of faith

Chapter Summary

Picking up in their hotel room straight after Nationals...

Chapter Notes

There's dirty smut, there's romantic smut, there's a lot of smut!
Just a reminder they are nineteen and never been in love. Ian has been sexually active and promiscuous for about five years and Mickey has only a handful of experiences - very casual, quick, functional ones at best.

Hope you enjoy this progression in their relationship. Happy reading!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ian was clawing at Mickey's ass, squeezing hard enough to leave bruises as he pulled Mickey down upon his hardening cock. Mickey's tongue was in his mouth and Ian was moaning like a two-bit whore, desperate and needy after waiting so long for Mickey to say yes.

Yes!

Mickey said yes.

Finally.

Mickey wanted to be fucked all night long and Ian was up for it. Wanting to take control, he rolled them aggressively, before realising he'd misjudged the bed and they landed on the floor with a thud.

"Fuckin' hell, Gallagher."

"Shut the fuck up and get your clothes off," he said, sitting up between Mickey's legs and ripping his own shirt off, before helping Mickey with his own. Ian stripped Mickey's sweats and boxers off in one go, that thick cock slapping back against Mickey's stomach, pre-cum pooling at the slit. He stopped and drank in the sight of a naked Mickey spread out before him.

"Touch yourself," he said, voice thick with lust.

Mickey looked at him, considering, before wrapping his hand around his cock and pumping it slowly. Fuck, it was so hot. Mickey took his other hand and ran it over his chest, circling a nipple then running his fingers down his abs and landing in the dark hair around his cock.

"You like that?" Mickey asked, eyes glancing down to the bulge straining against his sweats.

"Fuck yeah, I like that," he replied, slipping his hand inside and stroking himself.

Mickey bit down on his lip and moaned, reaching below his cock and rolling his balls. “Take your pants off, let me see how wet you are.”

A bolt of pleasure shot straight to Ian’s cock. He stood up and slid his sweats and boxers down, never taking his eyes off Mickey. He didn’t know if he wanted to blow Mickey or eat him out—he wouldn’t last if he did both.

Mickey sat up, his face level with Ian’s groin. “You know your cock is the best-looking cock I’ve ever seen. Give me a taste.” Ian rubbed his thumb through his pre-cum, then threaded his hands through Mickey’s hair and gripped, tilting Mickey’s head back. Mickey opened his mouth and welcomed his thumb inside, sucking it clean, tasting and moaning.

“Fuck, Mickey, will you suck me?”

Mickey needed no further encouragement and grabbed his cock, licking all the way from the base to tip. Ian didn’t know how much experience Mickey had at sucking dick, and very few people had experience sucking a nine-inch dick, but Mickey had him wanting to thrust in seconds. The way he sucked on the tip, and swirled his tongue around the head, and looked up at him while he swallowed him down. Ian knew he had to stop after only few minutes, his balls tightening and his legs shaking.

“Stop Mick, gonna cum,” he said, pulling out, then leaning over and kissing Mickey dirty, tongues lapping at each other. “Get up on the bed, wanna open you up with my tongue.”

Mickey let out an airy whine and Ian realised Mickey was nervous. He’d licked over Mickey’s hole before, when he blew him that one time, but it was brief and not a proper ass eating. As Mickey climbed up on the bed, Ian grabbed the lube and a condom from his bag and placed them on the bed.

Kneeling behind Mickey and running his hand up Mickey’s back, he asked, “Mick, you been rimmed before? You want me to?”

Mickey was on all fours, and looked back over his shoulder, his face blushing red. Ian thought it was beautiful. He knew Mickey had only had a handful of male partners and casual ones at that, so his experience was probably hard and fast and no foreplay. Ian wanted Mickey to have it all, and he wanted to be the one to give it to him. Fuck, he wanted to be Mickey’s first everything. Not only the first one to rim him, or any other sexual fantasies he might have, but also his first boyfriend, his first… Ian’s heart picked up speed when he realized what else he wanted. Love. This would be his first time in love, too. Was he already halfway there?

“This is fuckin’ embarrassing. Nah, I haven’t. Fuckin’ dirty, man.”

“Mickey,” he said, as he laid a few kisses to his right butt cheek, “But good dirty, yeah? It’s not embarrassing. Wanna be your first. Tell me if you want it, want to make you feel good.” More kisses, this time to Mickey’s left butt cheek. Ian bit gently, then licked over it, looking for physical cues Mickey wanted him to continue. The slight push back had Ian inching closer to Mickey’s ass crack with his tongue, but still not separating those cheeks.

“Yeah, I want it. Been thinking about it.”

“Really? What else you been thinking about?” Ian spread Mickey’s ass cheeks, sighed at the sight of that sweet, tight hole and licked tentatively across it. The smallest whimper escaped Mickey’s lips. Ian used just the tip of his tongue to circle delicately around the rim a few times, then began lapping at Mickey’s ass like he was licking an ice cream. Mickey’s scent and taste did something to

Ian; sent him a little crazy, lit a fire deep in his gut.

“Oh fuck, Ian. Jesus, it feels so good. You like doing that?”

Ian pulled away and slipped his hand between Mickey’s legs to give his cock a few tugs. “I fucking love doing it. So relax and enjoy.” Ian gave a little slap to Mickey’s ass, testing it out. Mickey’s shuddering breath told him everything he needed to know.

Spitting onto Mickey’s hole, he put his tongue to use, alternating between long licks with his tongue flattened and flicking in and around Mickey’s hole. After a few minutes, he could feel Mickey relax, the muscles loosening, his ass opening up for more. Ian was so fucking turned on, moaning as his tongue began to dip inside.

“Oh fuuuuck, Ian, holy fuck. Is your tongue inside me?”

Mickey’s hole was opening and clenching around his tongue as Mickey’s panting quickened. Ian knew Mickey was still holding back. He pulled away again, slapping Mickey’s ass harder this time. “Fucking just let go, Mick. Let me hear you moan, baby. Gonna have my dick inside you soon.”

Spitting again, he returned his tongue to Mickey’s hole and started fucking into him. Mickey dropped his head down to the bed, then leaned back and held his ass cheeks open wider. “Oh fuck yeah, Mickey. You want it baby, don’t you?”

“Fuck yes, I want it, Ian. Fuck me with your tongue.” Mickey began thrusting back, and Ian wished Mickey was riding his face. “Jesus fucking Christ, Ian, feel like I could cum just from this,” Mickey whined, reaching for his cock. “You gotta stop. Get in me.”

Ian could tell Mickey was close, so he sat up and grabbed the lube, coating two fingers. Pushing inside, he kissed up Mickey’s back as he fucked his fingers in and out, getting more keyed up about getting his dick inside Mickey’s tight heat. Curling his fingers, he located Mickey’s prostate and gave it some attention, moaning at the way his blue-eyed beauty bucked with each touch.

Mickey was completely relaxed now, his hole open and ready. “Mick, you have a position you like?” Normally he wouldn’t ask, he would just take the lead, but he wanted Mickey to enjoy this —they would never have a first time again.

“I like it from behind. Pound into me, Gallagher.”

Ian wasn’t sure Mickey knew what he liked yet, but he took his word for it and put the condom on, then ample lube before lining himself up behind. He was so hard, his dick throbbing and desperate to cum. Taking a deep breath, he tried to pull himself back from the edge. It would be so fucking embarrassing if he lasted two minutes. Spreading Mickey’s cheeks apart, he pushed the head of his dick inside—pleasure shooting through his body as he passed through the tight ring and was encased inside Mickey. He groaned so loudly, almost grunted, Mickey sighing like he finally made it home.

Starting off slowly, he thrusted smooth and deep—rolling his hips into a boneless Mickey who let himself be pushed forward with every pounding. Mickey’s head was turned to the side and Ian watched him bite down on his lip, eyes closed, and a look of absolute bliss on his face. It was even more beautiful to watch than his cock sliding in and out of Mickey’s ass. And that was a new experience for him. He wanted to kiss Mickey, wanted to get closer, so he leant forward, wrapping an arm around Mickey’s chest and pulled him up onto his knees.

Mickey leant back against his chest and tilted his head up, “Ian.” Mickey whispered it like it was a question - like he was asking for something but didn’t quite know what he wanted.

“Here baby,” he replied, cupping Mickey’s jaw and capturing his lips. Ian rolled his hips, thrusting gently in and out of Mickey, all the while kissing him and holding him tight. This was nothing like sex had ever been before and his heart pounded heavy in his chest. “Will you ride me, Mick?”

“Fuck, Ian. Maybe.”

Ian knew this would be a new position for Mickey, but he also believed Mickey would love it. And he selfishly wanted it for himself too, having spent many nights fantasising about it already. He pulled out and laid down on the bed. “Want to see you fuck yourself on my cock,” he said, as he grabbed Mickey’s hips once he was straddled over him.

Mickey reached back and lined himself up, sinking down quickly. “God damn Gallagher, your cock is fucking perfect. Stretches and fills me up. It’s hitting somewhere deep inside. Never felt like this before.”

Ian chuckled, he knew all about his nine inch dick and hitting Mickey’s second hole, but he’d explain that later. “Come on Mick, give it to me.”

Mickey began bouncing up and down, just small at first, as he got a feel for it. Then he gained confidence, trying different angles, finding his prostate, circling his hips, then rolling his hips sensually like a fucking stripper. Ian couldn’t do anything but stroke those muscular thighs and try to hold off his own orgasm. “You are one sexy motherfucker, Mickey Milkovich. Fuck yourself baby. Take what you want.”

Ian watched Mickey’s cock bounce up and down as their bodies slapped together fast and hard. Mickey’s pre-cum was leaking down onto Ian’s stomach while Mickey had his head thrown back, eyes screwed closed as his tongue swiped over his lips. Ian couldn’t stop it, his balls were pulling up and he needed to release, needed to claim Mickey. “Fuck Mickey, I gotta cum baby,” he almost yelled.

“Ahh yeah, you like my tight ass.” Mickey pumped his own cock as he squeezed around Ian’s shaft. *Fuck me!* Ian came like a motherfucker, holding Mickey’s hips as he fucked up into him. He was grunting hard with each release, vision blurring as his skin tingled with pleasure. Mickey followed him, only seconds behind, shooting hot onto his abs, a string of mumbled curses falling from his mouth.

“Come here,” he said, reaching for Mickey, those perfect lips coming down to rest on his. Ian wrapped his arms around Mickey, one threading up into the black hair, as he deepened the kiss. His dick was still inside Mickey, something he knew he was going to crave from this day forward. It was the most satisfying sex he’d ever had. Mickey was perfect for him in every way.

They got up and made their way to the bathroom to clean up, barely keeping their hands and lips off each other. Mickey wasn’t saying much, and neither was he, but they were smirking at each other the whole time. When Mickey hesitated at the foot of their respective single beds, Ian grabbed his hand and pulled Mickey into his bed. There was no way he was letting Mickey out of his arms tonight.

As they settled down to sleep—Ian spooning Mickey and threading their fingers together—Mickey whispered, “Never slept with anyone before.”

Ian smiled at Mickey’s confession before pressing a kiss to his shoulder. “Glad I’m your first. I’m

so tired, gonna sleep like a baby next to you."

"Night, Gallagher."

"Night, Mick."

*****

Mickey stirred in the middle of the night, his cock hard and his body aching with need. Ian was sleeping soundly behind him and he tried to ease back into it too. As he dozed, he lazily stroked his dick, trying to satisfy that burning desire. Mickey's mind was consumed with memories of them fucking. It was nothing like any of his hook-ups, or even his fuck buddy. He hadn't realised how bad his sex life had been.

Was that how it felt to have sex with someone you had feelings for? He wanted Ian's dick inside him again. And again. And again. Riding was new to him, but he enjoyed being in control, enjoyed facing Ian and seeing him cum. His cock was leaking just thinking about Ian's orgasm face—he did that. Mickey made Ian cum like that. Jesus, it felt good.

Pushing his ass back a few times, he sighed when Ian's cock hardened under the friction. The room was almost dark, just a faint light coming through the gap in the curtains. Mickey was still sleepy, caught in that place between being asleep and awake. It was nice, like being high. He continued to rock forward into his hand and back onto Ian's ass until he heard Ian moan and join in —nudging his hand away so he could take over stroking his cock and thrusting forward as Mickey pushed back.

They continued this way for minutes, hours, who could say. It was heaven. Kisses were peppered up his neck and then a tongue licked at his earlobe. Ian manoeuvred him onto his back and then settled over him. The weight of Ian on top of him felt comforting and safe, and he wrapped his legs around Ian's waist as they rocked against each other.

"Oh Mickey," Ian said, voice thick with emotion, between kisses. "Need you again."

He reached out to grab the lube from the nightstand and pushed Ian back, so he was sitting between his legs. "Want you too," he said, slicking up Ian's cock with lube then laying back down. Ian settled over him again. He had adjusted to the dark and could see Ian's eyes looking down at him —open and emotional—and he wondered if he looked the same.

They watched each other as Ian pushed inside him. He held on tightly as his body thrummed with pleasure, every slide in and out better than the one before. "Kiss me," he whispered. Mickey had never heard his own voice sound so full of love, so affectionate. It sent a bolt of fear through him, knowing all too well what was happening between them.

As Ian connected their lips and licked into his mouth, he couldn't deny they were making love. Mickey was making love to this boy that had pushed himself into his life and turned his world upside down. Ian made him feel things he never thought possible. He felt vulnerable and excited and terrified and hopeful all at once.

Ian kissed down his throat and sucked on his neck, all the while bringing him closer to release. He'd never fucked face to face, never known how good it felt to have someone's body rock against his cock, the build burning slow and deep in his belly.

"Cum inside me, Ian. Wanna know if I can feel it."

Ian rocked a little faster, a little harder, and it pushed them both over the edge. He almost gasped as he felt Ian's dick pulse inside him, followed by a rush of warmth. It made him feel wet and sexy and increased the intensity of his own orgasm releasing hot between their bodies. Ian kissed him again before asking, "Could you feel it? It was fucking amazing."

"I've never fucked without a condom before. Like the idea of your cum inside me. Leaving part of yourself."

When Ian pulled out, he slipped two fingers back inside him, moaning at the sensation. Mickey wanted to feel it too and added a finger of his own. "Fuckin' hot," he murmured before licking back into Ian's mouth.

Ian wiped their stomachs with the sheet and Mickey even let him wipe his ass clean of lube and cum. Then they switched beds, cuddling together face to face. Mickey's head was tucked under Ian's chin as Ian stroked up and down his back.

"Are we together, Mickey?"

Mickey pressed a kiss to Ian's chest. Ian sounded so unsure of himself, the uncertainty clear. But Mickey understood only too well. "You want that?"

"So fucking much. Feeling all kinds of shit right now. You have no idea."

"Think I do. And yeah, we're together."

As Ian placed a kiss to the top of his head and continued to caress his heated skin, he drifted back to sleep. Content. And happy.

*

Mickey opened his eyes only to screw them shut again- the sunlight streaming through the gap in the curtains. Then he realised he was alone in his bed. No hot ginger plastered to his back. Replaying the events from the previous night, he broke out in a cold sweat, panic setting in as he sat up and looked around the room. Where the fuck was Ian?

"Ian?" he called out, wondering if he was in the bathroom. No answer. Mickey got up and went to the bathroom, knocked, then opened the door. No Ian. "Fuck," he muttered under his breath. His worst fears were playing out in his mind. Had Ian already got cold feet? Had he fucked Mickey and was done? Had it not been as fantastic for Ian as it was for him?

Sitting back down on the bed, he rubbed the heels of his hands to his eyes, recalling their conversation. Ian had asked if they were together. Mickey thought he might actually fucking cry. Had Ian really pissed off somewhere? This was a huge fucking step for him to trust someone. They didn't just fuck! It was so much more than that. Wasn't it?

Just as he was about to throw his clothes on and pack his shit up, the door opened and Ian backed in, hands full with coffees and a food bag.

"Mick, you're awake. Wanted to surprise you." Mickey must have looked how he felt because Ian frowned, adding, "Hey what's wrong?" as he put the coffees and drinks down and sat down beside him on the bed.

"Nothing. Fuckin' nothing," he said, trying to pull himself together. Ian was turning him into a

fucking pussy already.

“Doesn’t look like it. What’s going on?” Ian placed a hand on his thigh and squeezed.

The touch was enough to have him blurting out his emotions like a fucking girl. “I woke up and thought you’d gone. You know, changed your mind or some shit.” He couldn’t look at Ian and just kept staring at the floor.

“Mick,” Ian said, grabbing his face and forcing him to look at him. “Fuck no. I was buying my boyfriend some breakfast.”

“Boyfriend huh?” he said, grabbing a handful of Ian’s t-shirt.

“Yeah, you like the sound of that?” Ian had that cocky grin on his face, and he couldn’t stop a smirk reaching his own.

“Maybe.”

“Maybe I can get a morning kiss from my boyfriend then?”

Mickey pulled Ian in by his shirt, his stomach full of butterflies as their lips connected. It was sweet and flirty, and he fucking loved it. Best week of his life—winning Nationals, getting selected for Worlds and—he never thought he would say this—getting a hot ginger boyfriend.

*****

The following day they were at the airport, waiting at the gate with the rest of the athletes from Texas A&M to board their flight home. It was a long-standing tradition for the track and field team to wear their uniform while travelling, along with any medals they won on the journey home. Mickey was sitting opposite him, so they could face each other, and Ian thought Mickey looked hot with his National gold medal around his neck.

“I know that look, Gallagher. Don’t get any ideas, we’re about to board.”

“We could join the mile high club,” he said, eyes dropping to those pouty lips that were wrapped around his dick only hours ago.

“And lose our scholarships.”

“But you look fucking sexy with that gold around your neck,” he said, grabbing hold of the medal and pulling on it. Mickey came willingly, their faces now only inches apart.

“You’ll have to keep in your pants til we get back on campus.”

“You gonna ride me wearing only this medal?”

Mickey chuckled, blue eyes sparkling with mischief. “You’d like to see that, wouldn’t you? That mean I’m staying at your dorm tonight?”

“Hell yes, you’re staying at my place. Maybe I’ll call you champ when you cum.”

“You’re suck a fuckin’ dork,” Mickey said, grin from ear to ear.

“I’m your dork.” He yanked on the medal bringing Mickey’s lips to his own in a heated kiss.

Mickey's tongue swept across his lips and a moan slipped from mouth when their tongues connected.

"Huh hmm!"

They both pulled apart to find Ian's coach standing next to them, hands on his hips and a frown on his face.

"Can I help you, Coach Wells?" he asked, standing up so he was eye level with his coach.

"Yes, you can help me Mr. Gallagher - by behaving appropriately in your Texas A&M uniform."

"And how am I not behaving appropriately, Coach?" Ian had gone from deliriously happy to fucking pissed in about 0.5 seconds. Mickey stood up next to him and placed a calming hand on his lower back.

"It's completely inappropriate for two athletes to have their tongues down each other's throats in the middle of the airport. The school has a reputation to uphold. So quit it with the public PDA's. Do I make myself clear Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Milkovich?"

Ian was about to have his bit to say when Mickey stepped in front of him and spoke, "Coach, I've just got one question for you. If one of us was a woman, would we be having this conversation?"

Coach Well's eyes opened wide with shock before he composed himself. "Of course we would Mr. Milkovich, and I don't like what you're implying. This is your final warning. If I catch you two again, I'll report you to the head of the department."

Ian had heard enough. "You fucking serious? You're going to report us for kissing? You're my coach, for fuck's sake. This is bullshit. I've seen plenty of couples kiss in their unifor-"

"That's enough, Ian. I am your coach and that is why I'm warning you. We'll discuss this further at training tomorrow." With that said, Coach Wells turned and walked away.

"Is he fuckin' serious? He knew you were gay, didn't he?" Mickey asked.

"Everyone knows I'm gay. Guess hearing about it and seeing it are two different fucking things."

"And you wondered why I've always kept my orientation private - now you fuckin' know why. Homophobes are fuckin' everywhere."

"Yeah, well I'm not putting up with his shit. I'm gonna go to the head of the department and report his motherfucking ass for discrimination."

Mickey grabbed his arm and patted his cheek gently. "Hey, hold up a minute. Before you go mouthing off, just remember we're both on scholarship here. Don't want to piss the whole department off."

"Mickey, they aren't going to kick us out. You're a fucking national champion and they know I have the potential to win Worlds. They need *us.* If I wanna kiss my fucking boyfriend in my uniform, then I'm gonna kiss my fucking boyfriend. Okay?"

"Okay, now calm the fuck down. We're boarding." Mickey grabbed his hand and pulled him in the direction of the gate. Ian was a mess of emotions—his boyfriend was holding his hand for the first time and that made his stomach flutter with excitement, but the moment was marred by his fucking homophobic coach. He didn't think he was going to settle until he had Mickey in his bed, in his

arms, and away from all this fucking bullshit. But that would have to wait, they had a flight to get through first.

Chapter End Notes

I am not going to be able to keep to a definite posting schedule the next couple of weeks - work is crucial at the moment for my financial security. I will still get this finished over the next couple of weeks but can't lock down posting days.

Please kudos, comment and subscribe (or user subscribe) - very much appreciated!
Follow me on twitter @dancelovermk
Take care - so happy for all my American readers this week!
Rach x

Choices

Chapter Summary

Picking up the morning after they arrived home from Nationals.

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the delay - work is absolutely kicking my ass and I ended up in hospital as well. I'll be okay but still dealing with issues. I hope you enjoy this chapter - it is quite heavy on dialogue as the boys deal with the fallout from the airport incident. You may also have noticed I added a chapter - having underestimated content/word count in my original plot overview.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Mick, are you even listening to me?” Ian pulled a pair of boxers out of the drawer and turned to look at his boyfriend who was still lounging in his bed.

“Pretty hard to fuckin’ concentrate when you’re walking around buck naked and dripping wet from the shower.”

Ian couldn’t help but smile. “You should’ve joined me, and I would’ve made *you* dripping wet.”

Mickey pulled back the sheets to expose his rock-hard cock, glistening at the tip. “Think you already did.”

Ian’s boyfriend was a fucking tease. “Fucking hell, Mick. I was trying to have a serious conversation.”

“Why don’t you bring that sweet mouth over here and put it to good use, then I’ll take you out for breakfast and my ears will be all yours.”

Mickey was smirking at him, that playful glint in his eyes, and Ian was helpless to resist. It sounded like a win-win anyway, so he moved over to the bed and was about to position himself between Mickey’s legs when his boyfriend halted him. “Was thinking we could 69 it.”

“Oh, you were, were you?” Ian turned himself around and laid down on his side, Mickey turning onto his side too. “You enjoy last night, champ?” he said before holding Mickey’s dick and circling his tongue around the tip. Ian let his mind wander back to the previous night, Mickey riding him wearing nothing but the national gold medal. Fuck, it was sexy. As he sank his mouth down around Mickey’s cock, his own dick reached full hardness under the firm grasp of his boyfriend’s hand.

“You know I did. Came three fuckin’ times in three hours. Love this cock.” Mickey sucked on the head of his shaft, moaning obscenely as he licked into his slit. Ian couldn’t believe how sexually well matched they were; being with Mickey was nothing like anyone else. Mickey was beyond

compare.

They were soon in sync as they bobbed up and down. He burned for Mickey to release into his mouth as much as he craved his own orgasm. Was this love? Would he know he had fallen in love when Mickey's pleasure, Mickey's happiness, surpassed his own? Once Mickey began thrusting into his mouth, he surrendered to the pleasure and spilled deep down Mickey's throat. A second later Mickey joined him with heavy grunts and satisfied pants. He pulled off slowly and licked gently around the head, savouring the taste.

*

A second shower—this time together—and forty minutes later they were having breakfast at the campus café. "You ready to listen now?" he asked, shovelling his high protein, low sugar cereal into his mouth.

"Shoot," Mickey replied, picking up his coffee to take a sip.

"I wasn't fucking joking about reporting Coach Wells to Taylor Robinson."

"The fuck is Taylor Robinson?"

"Seriously, Mick? He's the Head of the athletics department. He can fire Wells."

"Are you telling me you want your coach fired eight weeks before you compete at Worlds? I know the guy's a fuckwit but changing coaches now would mean a disruption to your schedule and you're still recovering from your injury."

He sat back in the booth and sighed. What Mickey was saying was true—it was the worst time to change coach's but how the fuck was he supposed to trust a homophobic man with his career? "I think my old coach would set me a program and maybe even come out for two or three weeks. *If* the college allowed it."

Mickey looked unconvinced, and Ian couldn't understand why his boyfriend wasn't more upset about what happened at the airport. It kind of annoyed him - he wanted Mickey to support him on this, for them to be a team. "Why the fuck aren't you pissed off?" he said, letting his frustration get the better of him. "We were discriminated against for being gay. We shouldn't put up with that shit."

Mickey raised his eyebrows and put his knife and fork down. "Ian, where I come from, the family I come from, this don't mean shit. He didn't call us faggots or threaten us or try to beat the shit out of us, so who gives two fucks. Yeah, the guy's probably a homophobe, but it's nothing. You really never dealt with this shit before?"

Ian knew Mickey had a tough upbringing, but this made him realise he didn't know enough about his boyfriend's past. But he wanted Mickey to know this wasn't acceptable behaviour and they shouldn't have to put up with it. "Of course, I've dealt with homophobes before, but just because we're not getting beaten up doesn't make it okay. When I was in high school, this student was always talking shit, saying I liked taking it up the ass and threatening to, you know…"

"No, I don't know, Ian," Mickey said, looking angry as his brows knitted together in a frown. "But tell me, what did this asshole threaten?"

"You know… threatened to fuck me."

“And what’s this guy’s fuckin’ name?”

Ian laughed. Mickey was going to catalogue the guy’s name with the intention of fucking him up at some later date. Ian felt his dick harden even though he knew it shouldn’t turn him on.

“Gallagher, it’s not fuckin’ funny. That piece of shit was threatening to *rape* you. He might have been a fag and trying to hide it but that’s no fuckin’ excuse.”

“Yeah, well, you don’t have to worry. I reported him to the principal and my Dad backed me up and he got expelled. Which is my point. We have to stand up for ourselves. You and I have both seen straight couples getting personal in their uniform and no one’s said shit to them. I’m not taking this lying down.”

“Ian, I don’t fuckin’ like it. My GPA isn’t great, and I don’t want to risk losing my scholarship. You have a family to go back to. Me, I ain’t ever going back to live in Chicago. Sometimes, it’s better to keep your mouth shut.”

Ian stared at Mickey, trying to understand the deeply rooted fear that emanated off him. “First, I want to say that if we lost our scholarships, you wouldn’t have to go back to Chicago. You could come home with me. Live with me and my family.”

“Galla-”

“No Mick, shut your fucking pie hole and listen for a minute. I’m serious. It’s a moot point, anyway. Any college will give us scholarships. We have fucking world rankings. And I think we should start looking into the possibility of leaving here.” Ian reached across the table and grabbed Mickey’s hand. “I know we’ve only been officially together for three days. Don’t fucking laugh and shake your head. If Coach Wells doesn’t go, then I need to. I can’t spend another two years with him as my coach.”

“What are you asking me to do, Gallagher?”

“I’m asking if you’ll consider coming with me. We’ll only go where they’ll give us both scholarships. If I’m being honest, now we’re together, I don’t want to do this college thing without you.”

Blue eyes averted his gaze and Ian’s chest felt tight as he waited for Mickey to respond. It felt like forever before Mickey looked back at him and gave his hand a squeeze. “Okay. But leave my name out of it when you report him. If he doesn’t get fired, then I guess I can follow your ginger ass to another college.”

Ian stood up, leaned across the table and planted a kiss on Mickey’s surprised face. “You don’t know what a relief that is to hear.” As he sat back down, his cell vibrated with an incoming call. It wasn’t a familiar number, so he let it go to voicemail. Once he received the notification, he picked up his cell and put the phone to his ear to listen to the message…

Mr. Gallagher, this is Mr Robinson, head of athletics on campus. I have an important matter to discuss with you. I have checked your schedule and I expect to see you in my office at 2pm this afternoon. Thank you.

As Ian listened, he felt fear fester in his gut.

“The fuck’s wrong?” Mickey asked.

He placed his cell down on the table and looked at Mickey’s concerned face. And then he got

angry—his cheeks burned red, heat flooding his body. “Looks like fucking Wells reported us. That was Taylor Robinson. I’ve been summoned in for a fucking meeting at 2 o’clock. I’m sure you’ll be getting a call soon too.”

“Fuck!”

*

A few minutes before two, Ian was pacing outside Mr. Robinson’s office while Mickey stood stock still and watched him, eyebrows arched in mild annoyance.

“Gallagher, calm the fuck down.”

“Easy for you to say Mickey, they haven’t even called you.”

“Hey,” Mickey said, grabbing him by the arm and pulling him in close. “Play it cool. You go in there pissed and ready to start world war fuckin’ three and this it gonna blow up in your face.” Mickey threaded at hand around his neck. “Okay?”

“Fuck, yeah okay. You’ll wait here for me?”

“Course I’ll-”

“Ian, Mr Robinson will see you now,” the secretary said.

Mickey pulled him down and they kissed quickly.

“I’ll be here. Remember, your hurdles are the top priority.”

Ian nodded, then turned, walking past the secretary and entering the office. Taylor Robinson was sitting behind his desk and talking on the phone. He motioned for Ian to sit down, so he closed the door and made his way to the chair. Ian had met Mr. Robinson a few times and had never had an opinion of the man one way or the other. Ian guessed he was in his late forties or early fifties, bald and gray, with a face weathered from too many years in the sun. He came across as positive and energetic, much like a car salesman, and seemed assertive and masculine. The firm handshake and a pat on the back just some of the things that he remembered from their previous encounters.

Mr. Robinson hung up the phone and settled back into his chair. “Ian, thank you for coming in to see me today.”

“Didn’t sound like I had much say in it,” he interrupted, regretting it when he saw the look of disapproval cross the department head’s face.

“Do you know why I’ve asked you here today?”

“I have a good idea and it’s fucking bullshit.”

“Language, Mr. Gallagher. I won’t tolerate being spoken to like that. Coach Wells contacted me last night to report that you and Mikhailo Milkovich have begun a romantic relationship and were caught violating the school’s conduct policy at the airport yesterday.”

“As I said, that’s bull. And I want to make a formal complaint against Coach Wells for discriminating against me and Mickey based on our sexual orientation.”

“Ian, you’re jumping the gun here. Why don’t you let me speak for a minute and then you can respond? All right?”

“Fine, but nothing you can say will change my mind.” Ian sat back and crossed his hands in his lap, waiting for whatever bullshit was about to come out of Robinson’s mouth.

“Ian, Coach Wells and I spoke at length about this situation and I’ve called you in today because I want to give you some words of advice. It is my job and Coach Well’s job to look after you here. To make sure you achieve your academic and sporting goals so that you can be successful in life. You are only young and sometimes when we are young, we can’t see the bigger picture, we just rush headstrong into things without thinking it through.”

“With all due respect Mr Robinson, I’ve known I was gay since I was twelve and been acting on it since I was fourteen. This isn’t a phase; this is who I am and who Mickey is and-”

“Ian, you need to let me finish. I’m not suggesting this is a phase and from what Coach Wells has told me, you and Mickey appear to be in serious relationship. But you are on a path that may see you as world champion, Olympic champion. I know you’ve worked your entire life, sacrificed everything, to get to this point. And what I’m advising you to do is to keep your private life private. You want the million-dollar Nike deal? Or Adidas? Then you need to think about your image, your brand. You know as well as I do that track athletes rely heavily on their endorsements and sponsorship deals.”

Ian’s heart thudded in his chest. His mouth was dry, and he felt unnerved by Robinson’s words. When he stopped to think about it, there wasn’t a single ‘out’ male track athlete he could think of. Yes, there were gay athletes, and he knew who they were, but none of them were out. So maybe Robinson had a point. Mr. Robinson was still talking, but his mind was struggling to stay in the moment, the room and everything in it appearing bigger.

“Ian, Coach Wells is also worried you are too distracted by this romance and not focussed on your training. Getting back to full fitness and winning Worlds will put you in the public eye and on the world stage. You know you have the potential to set a new under 20 world record and if you do, then the press is going to be all over you. Do you want everyone to be talking about your sexuality or talking about your talent? Because I can guarantee you, if you don’t keep your relationship to yourself, then you’ll end up being labelled the gay hurdler. Ian, look at me. Coach Wells is not homophobic and nor am I, but many people in the world are. I would hate to see you lose your earning potential over this. No one is asking you to end this relationship, just keep it behind closed doors. Protect your career.”

Ian felt like he was going to throw up. He knew how important sponsorship was in athletics—no one made a living off competition wins. The bulk of his income had to come from endorsements and corporate sponsorship, and he had no fucking idea why he had never thought about the lack of ‘out’ track stars. Hurdling was everything to him, and he wanted to make it his career. Could he keep his love life hidden?

Taylor Robinson stood up, “Thanks for coming in today, Ian. I trust you will make the right decision for you, and for Mickey too. He doesn’t have your level of talent, and he will need sponsorship to survive if he goes pro after college. If you care about him, then you need to protect his future as well.”

Standing up on jelly legs, Ian reached across the desk and shook Mr Robinson’s hand. “You’ve given me a lot to think about.” Ian turned and headed toward the door, stopping when Robinson spoke again.

“And go easy on Coach Wells, he cares about you.”

“Thanks,” he muttered, then slipped out of the office.

*

Thirty minutes later, he and Mickey were seated up the back of the grandstand, still discussing the situation before training began for the afternoon.

“This is a fuckin’ big change of heart, Gallagher. You went in there hell bent on making a formal complaint against your coach and now you think Robinson’s got a valid point?”

Ian studied Mickey’s face, still not sure where his boyfriend stood on this topic. Ian wanted to make the right decision, and for both of them. It didn’t seem right to hide their relationship, but he also didn’t want to be known by his sexuality rather than his talent. He’d worked hard to be at the top, and he wanted to make as much money as possible while it lasted—there was no guarantee his career would be long, injuries always a threat. The fact that there were no ‘out’ athletes seemed to speak to the merit of what Robinson had said. And fans had not been kind to a couple of athletes rumoured to be gay.

Mickey was a thrower, and Ian suspected people would be even less accepting of a gay thrower than a track athlete. The world was still so fucked up when it came to people’s stereotypes about masculinity, gender and sexuality. Since they had met, Mickey had become much more open about being gay, and now Ian was wondering if that had been a mistake. A mistake Ian had led him to.

“Mickey, you gotta admit there aren’t any ‘out’ athletes with major endorsements. That speaks fucking volumes. We can’t earn a decent living without good sponsorship—you know that.”

“I do, and I think there’s homophobic fuckwits everywhere – which is why before I met you, I wasn’t really out. I wasn’t hiding it here, but I sure as shit wasn’t advertising it. I mean, you had no fuckin’ idea I was gay until that day we met. I just thought this was important to you. What happened to standing up for your rights? You don’t think Wells is a homophobe anymore?”

Ian let out a puff of air, feeling tired and conflicted. “I thought he was. Now I’m not sure. Maybe he means well, even if it’s fucked up. I can just see me winning Worlds and the interviewer asking me about gay rights and who my boyfriend is rather than about my race or my time. And then Nike won’t want to sponsor me. They’ve already approached me, you know. Once I go pro, they’ve told me they want to talk contracts.”

“So, what do you wanna do?”

“It’s not just me, Mick. What do you want to do? We’re in this together.”

“I’m willing to try it if it’s what you want. Lived most of my life in the closet, won’t be all that hard for me. Not sure about you, though. You’ve fucked every fag on campus. As long as you’re not pretending to be straight and fucking women, then I’m okay with it.”

“Okay, then we’ll see how it goes.” Ian reached out to cup Mickey’s jaw, his boyfriend pulling away.

“None of that shit in public then. You and me are back to acting like bros.”

“Fuck, this is gonna be hard,” he said, realising he would have to monitor his every move around

Mickey.

“You want to do this then that’s the price you gotta pay, Gallagher. Hey, my coach is making his way out to the cage, I gotta go. Your place tonight or will I see you tomorrow?”

“My place. But come after ten so no one sees you arrive.”

Mickey picked up his training bag and began descending the steps. “This is fucked up, Ian. Everyone already knows I sleep over at your dorm.”

Ian didn’t answer, he just watched his boyfriend move away from him as he contemplated if this was the stupidest thing he had ever attempted to do.

*****

A week after they agreed to keep their relationship on the down low, Mickey had adjusted, and he and Ian were incredibly happy when they were together. Maybe keeping it separate from the rest of their lives almost made it more exciting. What was between them was for their eyes and ears only, and the longing stares in public made Mickey burn even hotter for his ginger boyfriend. Sneaking into each other’s dorm room at night seemed illicit, and the dirty texts Ian sent him—often when they were both at the track or the gym and in view of each other—made him blush like a virgin.

But despite all that, he felt compelled to share his feelings, his relationship, with someone. He never thought he was boyfriend material, never thought being in a relationship would make such a difference to his life—but it did—and he was bursting with a need to brag about it. Even as he acknowledged his feelings, he couldn’t fucking believe it. If Terry could see him now, he would want to put a bullet in his son’s gay ass, cos Mickey was all kinds of soft for Ian Clayton Gallagher.

Mickey hadn’t told Ian yet, but he knew he was in love. He was in so fucking deep he was drowning in it. Thoughts of Ian consumed him day and night—didn’t matter if he was brushing his teeth or throwing a discus—everything circled back around to Gallagher. Butterflies had taken up residence in his belly and he barely ate, having lost 2 kilos since they made it official at Nationals. When they were apart, his body ached, the craving for Ian overriding all else. He got hard just from his thoughts and it didn’t matter how many times Ian fucked him, or how sore his ass was, he still wanted more.

Sleeping next to Ian was something he needed, like he needed oxygen. No longer could he sleep soundly on his own—he had to have Ian plastered to his back and his warm breath on his neck. Mickey liked to kiss the palm of Ian’s hand before he fell asleep and press the soles of his feet against Ian’s shins. For the first time in his life he felt loved, and safe, and cared for, and it was addictive as all fuck. Ian had changed him at some cellular level and there was no going back, nor did he want to.

So, on Thursday evening, when he still had a few hours to wait before he could sneak into Ian’s dorm room, he made a huge decision and called Mandy. There was no way to know how Mandy would react to him being gay, but he was hopeful she would be okay with it. Her best friend in high school was gay, so he was certain she wasn’t homophobic like the rest of the family.

Mandy answered on the fifth ring, “What’s up, assface?”

“You fuckin’ miss me, bitch. Don’t even try to lie,” he shot back, a smile on his face.

“Mick, you’re such a fuckin’ dick and why don’t you call more? I’m stuck here while you’re off playing college boy, the least you could do is call more.”

“I know, I know, but I’m fuckin’ busy trying to keep up with classes, and my training schedule is double what it used to be. And, well, something else has been keeping me busy too. That’s sorta why I’m calling. Got something it’s time I told you.” His voice had dropped low and he considered backing out and not telling her.

“Sounds serious, so spit it the fuck out. Lip is coming over soon.”

“Lip Gallagher? You still seeing him?”

“Yeah, it’s getting serious. You met his half-brother, Ian, didn’t you? He’s some hot shot hurdler according to Lip.”

“Yeah, I told you I met him. Actually, we’ve been hanging out a lot. Has Lip told you anything about him?”

“Like what?”

“I don’t know, anything.”

“Not really, but who gives a shit? What did you want to tell me?”

Mickey felt like he was going to vomit. But he wanted to tell his sister, wanted to tell someone about Ian, wanted someone he could talk to about their relationship. “Well, it’s kind of to do with Ian. Fuck, Mandy this may come as a bit of a shock but…um…well, I’m gay.”

Mickey held his breath, waiting for his sister to respond. Seconds ticked by and he finally blurted out, “Aren’t you gonna fuckin’ say something?”

“Fuckin’ hell, Mick. Does Dad know?”

“Course he doesn’t fuckin’ know. If he did, I’d be six feet under. But I’m not telling him, I’m telling you, and I thought you’d be okay with it.” Mickey felt panicked, sweat breaking out under his arms and across his upper lip.

“I am. Mick, I am. You know I always wondered cos you never had any girls over. So, is Ian gay too? Are you two…?”

“Yeah, we’re together. I’m fuckin’ happy, Mandy. For the first time in my life. Haven’t got Pops busting my balls and watching me, and I feel like I can be myself. Although I never thought I’d… you know…”

“No, I don’t know. You never thought you’d come out? Have a boyfriend? Mick, are you in love?”

Mickey could hear the teasing lilt in his sister’s voice, but he knew she was okay with it, maybe even happy for him. “Maybe all of the above. He makes me feel…shit, I don’t what he makes me feel, but I want to be with him all the fuckin’ time. You don’t care if you have a fag for a brother?”

“Mickey, of course not. Love whoever the fuck you want. Just don’t tell Terry. I didn’t meet Ian when he visited Lip, so send me a photo. Want to see this guy who stole your cold, hard heart.”

“Yeah, okay I will. He’s a ginger, with freckles and pale skin, but he’s hot as fuck.”

Mandy laughed before asking, “And what makes him hot then?”

“He’s tall and shredded, and he’s got this prominent V that points to his fuckin’ mammoth dick.”

“Oh my fuckin’ god Mick. Too much information. Although I do like a big dick too.”

“Fuckin’ gross, Mandy. I don’t wanna think about my sister getting pounded.”

“Well, you started it, you dumb shit. Look, I gotta go and get ready before Lip arrives. Text me a photo of Ian. And I’m happy for you, Mick. I really am. Call me soon, okay?”

“Kay. And thanks, Mands, for you know…being okay with it. Bye fuckhead.”

“Fuck off, shit for brains.”

Mandy ended the call before he could add another insult. He felt good – he’d come out to someone and he was a little lighter for it. Smiling like a dork, he scrolled through his photos looking for one to send to his sister. At first, he was going to send one of just Ian – hovering over a shot of Ian without his shirt – but then he realised he didn’t want his sister perving on his boyfriend. He settled on one of the two of them together. They had taken a selfie lying in bed one morning and it was Mickey’s favourite photo of them. Ian had an arm around him, and Mickey was pressing a kiss to Ian’s cheek while Ian smiled into the camera. They looked happy and in love, and while it *was* intimate, he wanted his sister to see how happy he was, how much he had changed. Inserting the photo into the message, he pressed send.

*****

Mandy was checking the contents of the fridge when her phoned buzzed. Opening the text, she looked in wonder at the photo of her tough as shit brother lying in bed in the arms of a man, kissing him and clearly head over heels in love. She always knew that underneath all the bravado Mickey was soft as fuck, but this still left her lost for words. She zoomed in on the photo, taking in all the details, including how adorable this Ian Gallagher was. He was both cute and sexy, and his smile was something else. Mickey had done good. Once Lip arrived, she was going to grill him for every ounce of information on his half-brother.

The knock at the door startled her – Lip was early. She dropped the phone down on the kitchen table and ran to the door, swinging it open and launching herself at Lip, kissing him hard.

“Take that shit elsewhere, Mandy. And Gallagher, if you knock her up, I’ll fuckin’ kill you,” Terry said, as he pushed past them and into the house.

Mandy pulled away and rolled her eyes, then grabbed Lip’s hand and lead him through the house to her room, closing the door behind her. Lip was on her fast, fingers rubbing her pussy through her jeans as they kissed against the door. She spread her legs wider and reached down to squeeze his cock, and then her father’s voice rang out through the house.

“What the fucking hell is this? Mandy! What the fuck is this? Mandy!”

Mandy untangled herself from Lip and opened the bedroom door, just as her father barrelled in with her cell in his hand. The picture of Mickey and Ian still on the screen. Her body went cold and her heart beat wildly. What the fuck had she done?

“No son of mine is going to be a fuckin’ faggot! Who is this ginger fuck? Fuckin’ tell me Mandy!”

Mandy looked at Lip, her boyfriend’s eyes darting from the photo to Terry and back again. She

needed to warn Mickey. He was going to be so fucking pissed at her.

Chapter End Notes

My aim is to get the next chapter out by the weekend if possible. Will do my best!
Especially considering where I left it! Sorry!
Please kudos, subscribe and comment if you are enjoying this fic. Thank you!!!!
Take care everyone!!
Rachael x

When the past catches up with you

Chapter Summary

Picking up straight after Terry sees the photo of Mickey with Ian.

Chapter Notes

Okay, so I removed the total chapters on this because my estimate and original plot was not going to work with that many chapters. I estimate it's going to be 3 or 4 more chapters so I can give the story the depth it deserves. (The last chapter is an epic epilogue - cos I love writing epilogues!!)

Hope you enjoy! It seems bizarre that I'm posting this chapter after 11x6.

Happy Valentines Day!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Mickey was trying to fit in some study when his phone vibrated - the caller ID ‘Motherfucker’ lighting up the screen. Terry hadn’t contacted him once since he’d left for college. Dread descended over him as he stared at the screen, making no attempt to answer the call.

Ten seconds after it stopped buzzing, it started up again, but this time it was Mandy. Mickey snatched up his cell and answered, “Mandy, why the fuck is Pops calling me?”

“Mickey, I’m sorry. It was stupid. He’s fuckin’ lost his shit. Jesus, there he goes again. He’s leaving you another mess-”

“Mandy, what the fuck is happening?” Mickey was on his feet and pacing but he just *knew* without Mandy telling him. He didn’t know how his Dad had found out, but he knew his near perfect existence in Texas was over. Terry always ruined fucking everything in his life.

“Dad saw the photo of you and Ian. I’m sorry, Mick. It was a fuckin’ accident.”

Mickey ended the call and turned his cell off. Then he picked up his overnight bag and ran. He couldn’t breathe, he couldn’t think straight, and he didn’t know if he wanted to hop on a bus to the other side of the country, drink until he passed out, or fight every fucker that crossed his path. A huge part of him wanted Ian, and only Ian, but he was also afraid to let Ian see him like this—acting like a scared little kid. Because that’s what Terry did to him, made him feel like a helpless fucking five-year-old. His father made him feel weak, and ashamed, and useless.

He ended up at the track, lungs stripped of oxygen and tired from running. He’d been running from Terry, from himself, all his life. Rain began to fall as he slumped down in the discus cage, the night security lights throwing dull beams across the dark field. A tear spilled down his cheek and that was enough to push him over the edge, a sob escaping his chest without warning. He hated himself for letting that motherfucker affect him, for inserting his ugliness into this new life he was

building.

“Fuck fuck fuck!” he yelled into the night.

He wanted Ian. He needed Ian.

Turning his cell back on, he ignored the notifications alerting him to new voicemails and text messages and called his boyfriend.

“You better not be calling to say you’re not coming over,” Ian said upon answering. Mickey bit down on his bottom lip to stop himself from crying, unable to get any words out.

“Mick?”

He slapped a hand over his mouth and closed his eyes, trying to figure out how he could explain Terry so Ian would understand.

“Mickey, what’s wrong babe? Talk to me.”

“I’m at the track.” His voice cracked and his breath shuddered as he tried to hold it together. “Ian, something fuckin’ bad has happened.”

“Fuck Mickey, are you hurt? I’m coming okay. I’ll be there in ten.”

“Kay,” he muttered, then ended the call. The rain was getting heavier and he began to shiver—whether from the cold or from losing his shit, he couldn’t say. He opened Mandy’s message thread just as another call from Terry began. Rejecting the call, he scrolled through Mandy’s messages…

Mick, he’s going fucking nuts.

He wants to know Ian’s name but I told him I don’t know who he is.

Don’t listen to his fucked-up messages!!

He won’t go to Texas Mick. Don’t worry! He’s on parole, he can’t leave the state.

He’s full of shit, Mick! He can’t do shit to you. You’re an adult.

I told him to fuck off and leave you alone, and he backhanded me across the face. Motherfucking piece of shit!!!!!!

Call me tomorrow if you need to talk. I’m going to Lip’s for the night.

Pulling the hood of his sweatshirt over his head, he turned his phone off again, wanting to kick his father in the fucking head for hitting his sister. Would Terry come to Texas to set him straight? Mickey didn’t know. He’d seen his father beat the shit out of fags before; Terry reserved a special type of anger toward anyone who was queer. Mickey knew that being gay was the worst thing he could be in his father’s eyes and something that would never be accepted.

“Mickey!”

He lifted his head at the sound of his boyfriend’s voice to see Ian sprinting across the field towards him. Mickey almost laughed when his first thought was, ‘fuck he’s fast.’

“Mick, Mickey..” Ian came to a stop in front of him and dropped to his knees.

Mickey took one look at Ian's fear and confusion and crumbled. He felt his face screw up, as he made a last ditched effort to stop it, then the tears started falling. Ian pulled him into his arms, and he clung on tight, burying his face into his boyfriends' neck, wondering when he turned into such a weak bitch.

"Babe, whatever it is, we'll get through it. Fuck Mickey, can you tell me what's happened? You're fucking soaked through. Can you stand? We gotta get you inside."

Ian hauled him up to his feet, picked up the overnight bag, then with one arm wrapped around his waist, led him off the track.

*

Once back at the dorm, Ian took him into the bathroom and started stripping him out of his wet clothes. He'd barely spoken a word on the way back, feeling embarrassed and stupid. That was why he didn't want to call Ian. No one had seen him cry since he was ten years old and his mother left and never came back.

There was no way Ian was going to understand his reaction to being outed to Terry. How could his boyfriend, who had grown up in a normal home with normal parents, ever comprehend what it had been like in the Milkovich house? Arriving at college had been a fresh start that allowed him to reinvent himself without the violence, the crime and stain of the Milkovich name.

Standing naked, he stared at the wall while Ian stepped out of his own wet clothes. "Mickey, come on," Ian said, stepping into the shower and turning the water on. He took Ian's outstretched hand and followed him in, the hot water making him shiver as it hit his damp, cold skin. "Stay under the hot water until you warm up." Ian began cleaning him, as he laid hesitant kisses to his body—dropping one to his shoulder, then the back of his neck and finally to his cheek.

Maybe he didn't want to talk. Circling one hand around Ian's waist and the other around his neck, he pressed his lips to Ian's. Warmth flooded his body the moment Ian opened up and accepted his tongue. Mickey just wanted to be in the safety of Ian's arms, where the rest of the world receded into darkness. Arousal swept through his veins and he kissed down the column of Ian's throat, sucking gently on pale skin.

"Mickey, shouldn't we talk?" Ian asked, already breathless.

"Later. Just need you right now."

Ian manoeuvred him out of the shower, dried him and deposited him warm under the blankets. Laying on their sides, face to face, they kissed languidly, wrapped up in each other in a way they had never been before. The only sounds were their lips working against each other and the satisfied moans that originated deep in their chests. Mickey needed Ian inside him, so he pushed his boyfriend's hand toward his ass, leading long fingers between his cheeks to his aching hole.

"Are you sure?" Ian whispered against his mouth.

"I want to feel like I'm yours. Belong to you." Mickey pulled Ian closer and rubbed his leaking cock against Ian's abs. He was shocked by his honesty but was rewarded as Ian growled possessively into the crook of his neck.

"Mickey…baby…you are mine. Always want you to be mine."

Mickey had known for some time that Ian filled that gaping void inside of him - where all the hurt roamed free but remained buried. Maybe he'd never let someone in before, or maybe Ian was just

the first who wanted to. When Ian was physically inside of him, the past, the pain, all diminished. He felt lighter, and free, and like the person he was meant to be.

Ian fingered him slowly, lavishing his prostate with attention, before slipping a pillow under his ass and pushing into him like he was someone special. Someone to value and keep safe and cherish. Ian took care of him, caressed him, kissed him and gave him an orgasm that left him boneless and nourished.

Mickey wanted so desperately to tell Ian he loved him, the words sitting precariously on his tongue ready to tumble out. When he looked into Ian's eyes, he thought maybe he too, was on the verge of a confession. But it wasn't the right moment. He didn't want Ian to think he was only saying it because something was wrong. Worse still, he didn't want Ian to feel obligated to say it in return because he felt sorry for him. No, he would keep it for another day.

Afterwards they took a nap, Mickey unable to keep his eyes open a second longer once nestled securely in Ian's arms.

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Ian dozed while Mickey slept. He had never seen Mickey so vulnerable, so raw, and exposed. Since they had known each other, it had been Mickey looking after him and not the other way around. He was glad he could be there for his boyfriend, even if he still didn't know what the fuck was going on. Mickey wasn't physically hurt, so other than that, he couldn't rule anything out. Ian suspected it was linked to his family, or his past as the response presented like it had triggered him, unearthing something traumatic.

Mickey had been unresponsive until they made it into bed and the physical connection brought Mickey back into the present. Ian was deeply in love with Mickey and wanted to tell him, but part of him was afraid Mickey wouldn't say it back. Perhaps it was an unfounded fear, but it was a fear none the less. The lifelong rejection he felt from his stepmom, along with his biological Mom's abandonment, had stained him with a feeling of unworthiness. Sometimes he wondered if his unrelenting need for success was nothing more than a childish attempt at validation from those two women.

After almost an hour, Mickey stirred in his arms. He dropped a lingering kiss to the back of Mickey's neck, then gave him a reassuring squeeze. "How you feeling?" he asked.

"Guess you want an explanation."

"You don't have to tell me, but I want to help if I can."

"What time is it?"

Ian released his grip on Mickey and reached out for his cell on the nightstand. "It's just after 11. You hungry?"

"Not really. Thirsty. Need to piss." Mickey climbed out of bed and shuffled off toward the bathroom while he got up and retrieved clean boxers for them both. After putting his on, he took a bottle of water out of the mini fridge, then hesitated for a moment as his eyes glanced at the bottles of beer. Maybe Mickey needed something stronger than water.

Mickey returned, silently slipping into the clean boxers before taking the water bottle from him and sitting back down on the bed. Whatever had happened, it had come at the worst possible time

—they only had a few weeks until Worlds—and Mickey needed to focus on his training. As if they weren't dealing with enough trying to keep their relationship on the down low. His boyfriend had adjusted easily to hiding their romance, but Ian was still very much in two minds about it. It made sense on paper, but it didn't sit right in his gut no matter how much he tried to rationalise it.

"It's about my Dad—Terry. He found out I'm a fag." Mickey gulped down the water, still not meeting his eye.

Joining Mickey on the bed, he reached out and held his hand. "How did he find out and what was his reaction?"

"The fuck you think his reaction was, Gallagher?" Mickey exploded up onto his feet, then turned around to face him, throwing his hands up in anger. "You think he wants to throw me a fuckin' rainbow pride parade or some shit."

"Mickey, I'm not the fucking enemy here. I'm just trying to understand what happened."

"I'll tell you what fuckin' happened. I wanted to tell Mandy about us. I wanted to tell someone how fuckin' happy I've been since we…since…fuck!" Mickey threw his hands up to his eyes as he choked back tears. Ian was up and taking Mickey into his arms in one swift motion and just as quickly Mickey pushed him away. "Just give me some fuckin' space so I can get this shit out."

Ian backed up and sat back down on the bed while Mickey paced the floor, wiping his face and trying to sniff those tears back inside.

"I came out to Mandy and she wanted to see a photo of you. Because I'm a dumb fuck, I sent a photo us together—that one of us in bed—when I should have sent one of just *you*. Then the dumb bitch must have left the photo on the screen and Terry saw it. He's left fuckin' voicemails and texts and Mandy said he lost his fuckin' shit."

"What did he say on the voicemails?"

"I don't fuckin' know! I turned my cell off. He could be on his way here, Ian. He wanted to know who you were. He will fuckin' try to kill us both."

"Mickey, he's not *really* going to kill us, he's just piss-"

"You don't know shit about my Dad. He can drive here in 16 hours. Fuckin' hell Ian, your entire life has been perfect. You have no idea how other people live. You're a spoilt, prissy rich kid. I grew up around guns and drugs and violence. He taught me how to shoot when I was seven. I started drinking and smoking when I was ten. I've stolen shit and beaten people up and been a dealer." Mickey was out of control, shouting loud enough to alert everyone on their floor. "What you see, what you know about me, is just this fuckin' made up version. Yeah, my coach helped me, and I got off the drugs and quit smoking and stopped beating the shit out of people. But underneath all this, I'm still a fuckin' Milkovich. A fuckin' worthless piece of shit."

Ian felt like he'd had the wind knocked out of him as he stared back at his wild-eyed boyfriend. And he also felt hurt. Not because he was disappointed in who Mickey was before, but because Mickey didn't trust him enough to share his past. Yes, Mickey had kind of mentioned these things, but his boyfriend was so flippant about it he just thought Mickey was exaggerating and trying to sound tough. Now it seemed like there was a lot more to Mickey's life back in Chicago that he didn't know about.

Mickey had pulled a beer out of the fridge and was downing it in one go. Feeling anger rise to the

surface, Ian stood up and ripped the bottle from Mickey's hand, then shoved him down onto the bed. "Shut the fuck up and hear me out!" he yelled, hands grasping Mickey's shoulders and holding him in place. "First off, you're not a worthless piece of shit and if you ever say that again, I'm gonna kick your ass. Second, I don't give a shit about what you've done in the past. People aren't their past, they are their present and their future, and you are a fucking national champion discus thrower on a full ride scholarship at college. Your fucked up psycho prick of a Dad doesn't define who you are. I don't care what you did, you're not like that now and you should trust me. Why didn't you fucking trust me, Mickey? I'm *all in*, in case you hadn't noticed. We can face Terry together."

"And what if he turns up here and points a gun at your fuckin' head?" Mickey spat back at him. "You up for that? You still *all in* when that happens? What if he beats your ass and you're in hospital and you miss Worlds? What then? You think I can live with that? Live with being the person responsible for you losing everything you've worked for."

Mickey was looking at him with so much fear it was almost too much to bear. He pulled his boyfriend up and hugged him hard. Mickey fought him at first, but he didn't let go, and finally Mickey's body went limp against his chest, and arms circled around his waist. "I'm up for all of it, Mick. Stop fighting me and let me help."

They listened to the voicemails and read the messages together. Ian held Mickey through it, feeling him shake and shiver as his own blood ran cold at the sound of Terry's unrestrained anger. How someone could level such threats, such hatred at their own child was beyond him. Terry had indeed threatened to kill them both, said he was on his way to Texas, and was going to beat the faggot out of Mickey. Terry seemed to know every homophobic slur in the English language, and he spewed them out in a committed rage. Ian asked Mickey if he had a photo of Terry and he studied it, dedicating the man's features to memory. Because whether he was going to meet Terry soon, or in the distant future, he vowed to deliver justice for Mickey.

They called Mandy, and she promised to let them know if Terry left town, so they would have a warning. Mandy then called Mickey's brother Iggy to check if Terry was still in Chicago. He was. Ian listened as Mandy reassured Mickey, telling him she didn't think Terry would do shit. Ian discovered Terry was on parole and legally couldn't leave the state. After listening to Mandy, he believed she was right, and Terry would find the whole situation too much to bother with, especially risking a return to prison if he got caught. Mickey wasn't convinced, but Ian thought things were more hopeful than he first believed on hearing the voicemails.

At around 1am they ate pop tarts in bed and Mickey apologised for yelling at him and for not trusting him. And then his boyfriend took a deep breath and opened up about life in the Milkovich house.

"Ian, I've done a lot of shit I'm not proud of and if it wasn't for my athletics, I'd be in prison right now. I wasn't joking when I told you Terry is a career criminal—he's been in and out of prison more times than I can count—and he raised us to follow in his footsteps. He uses his fists before he uses words. And he hates fuckin' everyone—he's a proud Nazi, he's racist, sexist, and most of all homophobic. Don't think he hates any group of people more than the queers. When I was about fifteen… Jesus, Ian, you may not want to be with me after I tell you this."

Ian kissed Mickey on the cheek, "I will. It's in the past and I know you think the old you is the real you, but I know the person you are now is the true Mickey. You can tell me anything, babe."

"Terry, my two uncles, and me and Iggy were out of town picking up some guns from one of our regular suppliers. We arrived like an hour early and Terry just went straight in. The contact wasn't

home, but his teenage son—Emilio - was. The dumb fuck was naked in the living room, on his knees sucking off some random guy. The random took off, but Emilio wasn't so lucky. Terry beat the fuckin' shit out of him. Thought he was going to die. My uncles were laughing and egging Terry on then he made me…" Mickey stopped, tears threatening to spill again. "Then he told me I needed to learn how to deal with a faggot. Told me to kick him, punch him. When I said I didn't want to, he started asking me if I was a faggot too. Taunting me. Emilio was crying on the floor. I'll never forget it. One eye was already swollen shut, blood all over him, broken nose, split lip. Found out later he had two broken ribs and a shattered cheek bone. When I started kicking him and calling him a fuckin' faggot…" Mickey stopped talking, shaking his head with shame.

"You had no choice, Mick. You were fifteen and you were just trying to survive."

"Ian, you don't fuckin' understand. Emilio was…Emilio was my first. I'd been with him. Only one time, but he was a sweet kid. And even while I was kicking him, he didn't rat me out. I felt like a fuckin' monster. Still do."

Ian couldn't lie, it shocked him. He rubbed Mickey's back in circles as he tried to process what he'd been told. Mickey had only been fifteen and understandably terrified of his father. Ian needed to be understanding. It was clear how much guilt and remorse Mickey was still carrying around for Emilio.

Mickey cupped his chin. "Ian, I want you to know I will never let Terry get near you. He'll never lay a fuckin' hand on you as long as I'm alive."

"I know, babe. We'll look after each other. You need to move in here for a while, just to be on the safe side. Okay?"

Mickey nodded at him and then pulled him into a kiss.

*****

Mickey still felt unhinged the following day—fear and anger making regular appearances as he went about his day. He was constantly looking over his shoulder and surveying his surroundings, even though he knew Terry hadn't left Chicago.

In the afternoon Ian took him to get a new cell number so there was no way for his Dad to contact him again. He passed the new number onto Mandy and asked her to save it under an alias.

Ian had been there for him the previous night in a way no one had ever been before, and he couldn't be more grateful. Mickey appreciated Ian's empathy, and giving him a place to stay until things calmed down, but he didn't think Ian truly understood the depths Terry would go to, to put an end to their relationship. Terry was so fucking stupid that he would think getting Ian out of the picture would result in Mickey being 'straight again.'

They both had afternoon training, but Mickey had something he needed to do. Something that he didn't want Ian to be a part of. He didn't like the idea of sneaking around or lying to Ian, but he had to do what was necessary. "Ian, I got an errand to run so you better head back to the track so you're not late. I'll meet you after training." He was already backing away, not wanting to give Ian any room to negotiate.

"What errand? Shouldn't I come with you?"

"Nah, won't be long. You don't want Coach Wells on your ass again. It's okay, I'll meet you at the

track.” With that, he turned and jogged off in the other direction.

*****

A few days after the Terry incident, Ian was struggling to stay focussed on his training. Despite opening up about his past that night, Mickey had since closed off and was unwilling to talk about how he was feeling. Every time Ian asked if he was okay, Mickey snapped back at him, accusing him of treating him like a bitch. The more compassion Ian showed Mickey, the more Mickey insinuated Ian was emasculating him. It was a side of Mickey he hadn’t seen before, and he knew he was witnessing a previous version of his boyfriend. A version where he had to hide who he was, and was angry, defensive, and ashamed.

But Ian wasn’t giving up, he understood Mickey needed space to work through his shit. Even though Ian wasn’t good at giving people their space, he was going to try. Even when Mickey kissed him less and only wanted to be fucked from behind. Feeling lost, Ian had been calling Mandy—behind Mickey’s back. He found an instant connection with her, their conversations flowing, and it was helping him keep it together. Mandy had told him more about Terry and their life growing up, and it broke Ian’s heart. His boyfriend was the strongest person he’d ever met, and he never wanted Mickey to be subjected to Terry again.

Finishing his cool down, he rolled up his yoga mat then pulled his sweats over the top of his compression shorts. He couldn’t be fucked getting showered at the track and just wanted to get home to his dorm. His training session had been subpar. Coach Wells was being overly nice, and it made Ian uncomfortable. Since his talk with Robinson, Wells seemed to be going easier on him, praising him more, and sympathetic about his lack of fitness. He wanted to believe that Robinson and Wells had his - and Mickey’s - best interests at heart, but he still had doubts.

Once he made it to his dorm, he stripped off and had a shower. Mickey was at a gym session and expected back soon. They told everyone that Mickey had an argument with his roommate and was crashing with Ian until he could get reassigned. Calling each other bro and slapping each other on the back was both hilarious and tragic at the same time. He better get a fucking multi-million dollar Nike deal out of this charade. If he won Worlds and set a new record, he might quit college and go pro. He hadn’t told Mickey yet, but going pro would give them more freedom. What did he need a college degree for, anyway?

Pulling some boxers and a T-shirt on, he sat down at his desk and pulled out his books to study. He wasn’t in the mood. He had a stash of candy at the back of his bottom desk drawer that was calling to him. It wasn’t a good time to break his diet, but he murmured ‘fuck it’ as he leant down and pulled the drawer open. Lifting up the notebooks he kept on top, his body froze at the sight of what was underneath. In his dorm room. Hidden. And he certainly didn’t put it there, but he knew who did and he was fucking pissed. He gingerly picked it up. It was heavy and it made his heart beat too fast. And he didn’t know if it was loaded or not. Placing the gun down on his desk, he tried to calm himself. He’d had zero experience with guns—his family hadn’t owned any - and he believed nothing good ever came from them.

More than that, Mickey had violated his trust by hiding it in his room without his consent. Ian stood up and backed away from his desk, still staring at the gun. He didn’t want to fight with Mickey, but he was really fucking angry. As he tried to calm himself, Mickey entered the room and dropped his backpack at the door.

“What’s wrong? You look like someone stole all your protein bars.”

Ian stared silently at his boyfriend, then glanced over to the gun. Mickey followed his line of sight.

“Oh fuck. Hey, don’t turn this into something. I need it. We need it. If that fucker turns up, I need to know I can protect us.”

“You fucking serious right now? Is it loaded? Did you ask me if you could stash it here? What the fuck, Mickey?” Ian was yelling, his face burning red.

Mickey took a few steps forward, so they were only a couple of feet apart. “Calm your tits, it’s not loaded. The bullets are at the back of your t-shirt drawer. I didn’t ask you cos I knew you’d say no.” Mickey grabbed the gun off the desk and returned it to the bottom draw.

“You’re not fucking keeping that here.”

“Fine, then I’ll pack up my shit right now and go.”

Ian watched dumbfounded as Mickey grabbed his overnight bag and started pulling his clothes out of the wardrobe and tossing them into the bag. “That’s not what I meant, Mickey. Fucking stop. Let’s talk about this.” Ian had gone from pissed to panicked in three seconds flat. He didn’t want Mickey to leave. He sure as shit didn’t want to break up. Were they breaking up? Grabbing the bag off Mickey, he started pulling the clothes back out.

“The fuck you think you’re doing, Gallagher? Suck a naïve, fuckin’ clueless bitch!” Mickey turned and poked him hard in the chest, “Got the fuckin’ Glock to keep your prissy ass safe. Don’t you want me to look after you? Protect you?”

Mickey’s nostrils were flared in anger, his eyes dark, and his chest puffed out as they stared each other down. And the longer they stared, the more heat grew between them and the more Ian wanted him. They crashed their bodies together, mouths attacking each other, as they unleashed their rage and frustration. Mickey grabbed his cock, squeezing it too hard, just as Ian slipped his hands into Mickey’s pants and dug his fingers into the ample muscle of his boyfriend’s ass.

“Fuck me,” Mickey panted into his mouth. He threw Mickey down onto the bed and stripped him of his sweats and boxers, then grabbed the lube from the nightstand. Opening the lube, he went to pour it on his fingers when Mickey stopped him, “No prep. I’m good.”

Ian pulled his own boxers down, slicked up his throbbing cock, then pulled Mickey to the edge of the bed by his ankles and slathered lube over his rim. Gathering another generous amount of lube, he pushed two fingers in, twisted and scissored to spread the lube inside and then pulled out.

“Wait,” Mickey said, grabbing a pillow and sliding it under his pelvis to raise his ass to the perfect height.

With Mickey’s feet on his shoulders, Ian spread his ass cheeks again and pushed inside. It was tight as fuck and he groaned like he was in pain.

“Fuckin’ so good,” Mickey moaned, eyes closed and thumb rubbing over the head of his cock. “Want it hard, Ian. Need it. Fuckin’ fill me up.”

Ian needed no further consent and began thrusting long and deep, pulling almost completely out before impaling Mickey on his yearning cock. He built up speed, the sound of their bodies slapping together bringing his orgasm closer. Mickey was blissed out, one arm above his head as he used the other to slowly stroke himself.

“Mick,” he panted, “Baby, I can’t last. Gonna cum.” He dropped one of Mickey’s legs off his

shoulder, wrapped it around his waist, and then rolled his hips slow and sensual. Pausing at the hilt a few times, he circled his dick, stretching out Mickey's hole now he was in a more open position. Something about the way Mickey took his cock, clenched around it, and tried to keep it inside him made Ian's body pulse with pleasure. He was burning up as his balls tightened and he prepared to offload.

"Ian, kiss me. Fucking come here." Mickey reached out for him, pulling him down by the neck. Ian pounded into him as their tongues lapped obscenely, then his orgasm hit and he kept thrusting, wanting to push his cum deep inside Mickey.

"Mickey, Mickey," he moaned, feeling overcome with emotions.

"Fuckin' make me cum, Ian. Need it."

Ian pulled out and swallowed Mickey's cock while curling two fingers inside him, locating his prostate. His boyfriend's prostate was swollen with arousal, and he stroked it just how Mickey liked. Pulling momentarily off his boyfriend's cock, he instructed Mickey, "Fuck my face, baby," then wrapped his lips back around the head. Mickey thrusted up into his mouth four, five times and then spilled down his throat with a guttural moan.

Gently pulling off, he climbed back on top of Mickey and sucked on his bottom lip. They made out for ten minutes or more before Mickey complained he was too heavy. It was the most they had kissed since *that* night, and they needed it. Laying side by side, they looked at each other as their hands roamed lovingly over satisfied flesh.

"I'm sorry I didn't tell you about the gun. I was wrong."

"You've got to trust me. Not push me away."

"I know. I'm gonna do better."

"I am too. I've been talking to Mandy. Don't be mad I just nee-"

"I know," Mickey said, brushing a thumb across his cheekbone.

"You know I've been talking to Mandy?"

"She told me. She also told me to go easy on you. She's likes you."

"I'm sorry too. I shouldn't have gone behind your back. We've both got to be more honest with each other."

Ian moved in and kissed Mickey soft and gentle.

"Does this mean I can keep the gun here?"

"We'll see."

"Shower or nap?"

"Shower, eat, study, round two."

"What about shower, eat, round two?"

How could Ian say no to that? Standing up first, he pulled Mickey up into arms, kissing him tenderly as he backed Mickey all the way to the shower.

Chapter End Notes

I hope you enjoyed this chapter - please kudos, subscribe and comment - much appreciated!

My state has been put on lockdown again - supposed to be short but who knows! So my business has once again been forced into closure. Life is seriously kicking me in the ass! I hope everyone else is doing okay wherever you are!

Episode 6 spoilers (don't read if you haven't seen!)....
It was really nice to see an episode of Shameless where something meaningful and emotional happened - and we got to see Noel act like only he can -and bring back that depth of character that we all so love. Ian was a great husband!! I hope you all enjoyed it too!

Rachael x
Twitter @dancelovermk

Taking a Stand

Chapter Notes

> Okay - I have settled on 12 chapters - there's a lot happening in this chapter and the next! Chapter 12 will be a full chapter epilogue hopefully of epic romantic proportions! Hope you enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Mick, you’re on track for another PB at Worlds, keep up the good work,” Coach Garcia said before turning to address the entire group. “Gentleman, great session today. Finish your cool down and I’ll see you at the gym in the morning.” Coach Garcia patted Mickey on the back then headed across the field toward the change rooms. All the throwers began stretching.

Mickey had thrown himself into his training schedule, not only because he wanted to PB at Worlds, but because it was the best distraction from all the surrounding bullshit. He and Ian had argued again about the gun once their post orgasm high had faded but eventually compromised the following day. The desk drawer now had a lock. Mickey thought it was fucking ridiculous—if he needed it, he’d be shot dead before he could unlock the drawer, get the gun out, find the bullets, load the gun—you got the idea. If he hears Terry has left Chicago, then he’s carrying the weapon on him at all times. End of fucking story.

Now that he’d been outed to Terry, keeping his relationship with Ian on the DL suddenly seemed fucked-up. It was like his entire outlook had changed. While he was still scared shitless of his Dad turning up, there was a part of him that was lighter. It was almost impossible for him to explain how he felt, but he was no longer dedicating energy to keeping his secret. Shit, he hadn’t even known he’d been doing it. What he did know, was that he didn’t give a flying fuck about Nike or Adidas.

His boyfriend, however, did. And he understood. For Mickey, he was at college to get an education. If he made it as a pro athlete then great, if not, that was okay too. For Ian, hurdling was everything - his life’s passion. Mickey wanted Ian to have the opportunity to earn a good living off his sport, and to be admired for what he did on the track—without being reduced to his sexuality. For Mickey, now that he was in love, he wanted to show that off. His boyfriend was hot, and talented, and he had chosen Mickey.

Finishing up his cool down, he held his hand up to his forehead to shield his eyes from the sun and looked across the track at the hurdle group. Ian was always easy to spot with his hair glowing orange in the sun. The hurdlers had only just begun their session and were doing hurdle drills. Mickey watched Ian stumble and knock over a hurdle. He still couldn’t believe how clumsy Ian was doing his drills when he was so graceful in a race. Just as he drank from his water bottle, Ian knocked another hurdle over, causing Mickey to laugh out loud. The water went down his windpipe and he started coughing.

“Choking on ginger pubes huh, Milkovich?”

Mickey turned to face his training group, everyone now laughing at Johnson’s joke. “Yeah, laugh it up,” he said, still trying to get his breath back.

“I’ve always wanted to know. Do you get shit on your dick, Mick?” Fryer asked, getting rewarded with a pat on the back from Johnson.

“Real fuckin’ original Fryer, you dumb fuck!” Mickey threw his stuff into his sports bag and zipped it up. How long had his teammates been sitting on this homophobic bullshit? His anger was rising, even though he knew they thought it was just a bit of fun. After the shit week he’d had, he didn’t have the patience.

“I heard Mick is the girl in the relationship. He’s the one who likes to take it up the ass. Hey Milkovich, maybe you should join the girl’s discus team?”

That was it. He walked straight up to Johnson, chest puffed out, and pushed him back. “The fuck you say to me?” Johnson had quite a few inches on him, but that wouldn’t stop him.

Johnson stepped back, arms raised as if in surrender, “Lighten up Mick. It was just a joke. Fucking chill, man.”

Mickey was breathing hard as Johnson smirked back at him like the smug motherfucker he was. “Yeah, you’re real fuckin’ funny alright. Just remember who’s the National champion here. Maybe if *you* compete against the girls, you might actually make the final next time.” He picked up his sports bag, flung it over his shoulder and started walking towards the hurdlers.

“Fucking pussy, can’t even take a joke. And you wonder why people are sick of you homo’s and your fucking political correctness.”

Mickey almost halted, hesitating for a split second where he imagined pummelling his fists into Johnson’s face until his skull cracked open. But then he reminded himself that he wasn’t Terry, that he was better than Terry. He was a fucking National Champion now, and that put a target on his back. Flipping Johnson the bird, he kept walking. It was jealousy, plain and simple.

All the same, he felt like shit, adrenaline flooding through his body, his emotions heightened. Ian would know how to calm him. Ian would help him put it in perspective. As he got closer, Ian threw him *that* smile, the one that made his stomach flutter, and he quickened his pace. One hug, one kiss, was all he needed to ground himself. Ian must have seen something in his face, because the smile fell, and a frown replaced it as he moved a few feet away from the hurdlers.

“Hey Mick, you okay?”

Mickey shook his head, then reached up to thread his hand behind Ian’s neck and kiss him. But Ian quickly jerked away, “Hey bro, what’s up man?”

“You fuckin’ serious right now? I need you.”

“Mickey,” Ian said, tilting his head and moving further away from his training group. Mickey followed but was already back in a rage. “You know we can’t kiss in front of everyone,” Ian whispered.

Coach Wells yelled out, “Gallagher, less socialising, more training. You can catch up with your buddy later.”

“Mick, I gotta get back to training. We can talk about this later.”

“Yeah, well, Johnson and his fuckin’ buddies just pulled all this homophobic bullshit. I’m not asking you to leave training, I just needed…just fuckin’ forget it. I can see where your priorities lie. What these fuckers think of you is apparently way more important than your boyfriend. See ya

round, *bro*."

Mickey knew he was being an asshole, but he was too angry to rein it in. He headed off the track without a backwards glance. As he was about to round the corner of the grandstand, he heard Coach Wells yelling out 'Gallagher' and he knew Ian was in pursuit. As far as he was concerned, it was too fucking late. He heard Ian's steps only seconds before he was roughly turned, and angry green eyes were upon him.

"What the fuck was that all about?" Ian asked, voice low.

"You wanna know what the fuck that was about? You made me feel like your dirty little secret. Never thought *you'd* do that to me."

Ian let out a disgruntled huff. "Mickey, come on, be fair. You agreed to this, agreed to keep it quiet! What the fuck do you want from me? If doesn't work if we hide our relationship some days and show it on other days." Ian was waving his arms around, face twisted in frustration as if Mickey was the dumb fuck in this—and he wasn't having a bar of it.

"I didn't get outed to my Dad—oh and now I also have to put up with homophobic bullshit from my teammates - for my fuckin' boyfriend—who *claims* he cares about me—to treat me like a bro when I need him." Mickey wanted to punch something, anything, but he kept going. "Everyone knows you're fuckin' gay, Gallagher. Everyone knows we're together. This is like trying to put the fuckin' genie back in the bottle. Ain't gonna happen, it's fuckin' stupid. You think three years from now a reporter won't be able to dig up your past? There'll be a fuckin' line of fags queuing up to sell their story and you will have fucked. Every. Single. One of them!"

"Back to that, are we? You calling me a fucking whore now? If you're going to call me out for my past, then how about I return the favour, huh? You having a whinge about Johnson calling you a fag after what you've done, that's pretty rich."

Mickey thought he was going to explode. He needed to walk away before he punched Ian in the face, because that's how fuckin' pissed he was. But the look of hurt in Ian's eyes was keeping him rooted to the spot. He didn't mean it, and it never should have come out of his mouth. "I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that." He rubbed his forehead as he tried to collect his thoughts. "Ian, I agreed to do this for you—because *you* wanted it. But things have changed and maybe it's not what I want anymore."

Ian frowned as his eyes filled with panic. "Are you saying you don't want to keep our *relationship* a secret anymore or you don't want *me,* anymore?"

Mickey's heart was hammering in his chest and his legs were shaking. "Look, you know what? This is too fuckin' hard right now. And you'll be safer if you're not around me. Let's take some time apart. Focus on your fuckin' career and Worlds and afterwards if you decide you actually want a boyfriend then call me. I'll grab my stuff and be out of your place before you finish training." With that, he turned and walked towards the exit. Ian Gallagher was speechless for once, and it hurt like a motherfucker.

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Ian was beyond dumbfounded. He loved Mickey. He thought they were in this together. Standing behind the grandstand, he struggled to organise his thoughts. What the fuck did Johnson say to Mickey to upset him like that? He felt all his pain being channelled into anger, and he knew

exactly who would be the recipient.

Ian returned to the track and packed up his stuff.

“Where you think you’re going, Gallagher?” Coach Wells asked.

“Family emergency,” he muttered, making no eye contact.

“Now son, you need to focus on your training and not on-”

“Not your son.” He picked up his bag and headed back off the track. Wells was yelling at him, but his mind was focussed elsewhere. He located Johnson and his buddy Fryer in the change rooms then waited outside.

Johnson said goodbye to Fryer at the track gate and headed off North. Ian followed. And waited. Until the right moment.

“Hey Johnson,” he called out, keeping his voice light.

Johnson stopped and turned, giving him time to catch up. “Oh hey, Gallagher. This isn’t about Milkovich, is it? It was just a fucking joke. You should keep your bitch in line.”

Ian didn’t need to hear another word. His first punch hit Johnson’s nose, blood spurting out on impact. He followed it up with another to the gut, Johnson falling to the ground, the wind knocked out of him.

“Did you…fucking….break my…nose?” Johnson said, struggling to speak as he gasped for air.

“I fucking hope so, you fucking prick!” Ian leant over Johnson and grabbed onto his shirt, so he could look the asshole in the eyes. “You ever fucking speak to my boyfriend again and I will bury you. You understand?”

“Suck my dick, you fucking faggot.”

Ian pulled back and punched the motherfucker square in the jaw, and he was out cold. He checked his vitals, because he wasn’t a monster, waited until Johnson started stirring, then made his way home.

The entire night Ian waited for college security or the cops to come banging on his door and arrest him. Between calling and texting Mickey, he also spoke to his Dad about what he’d done. His Dad was angry with him—lecturing him on the potential consequences—but also saying he would line up a lawyer if he needed one.

At midnight he gave up on Mickey, obviously he wasn’t ready to talk yet. He took the key that was hanging in the wardrobe and unlocked the bottom desk drawer. The gun was gone. He went back to the wardrobe and stared at the empty hangers, and then he cried. Laying down on his bed, he could smell Mickey. Part of him wanted to rip the sheets off and burn them, and part of him wanted to never change them.

Why the fuck had he ever agreed to what Robinson suggested? He should have listened to his gut because there was no way he could hide who he was for years on end without going insane. Wells was a homophobe and so was Robinson, and he let himself be manipulated. They played on his fears, and for what? Because they didn’t want their precious track and field department to be known for having fag athletes? Were he and Mickey some sort of stain on the Texas A&M brand? Or were they just plain old homophobic assholes who hadn’t moved with the times?

When he finally cried himself out, he fell asleep burying his nose into Mickey's pillow.

*****

Mickey awoke with the worst fucking hangover of all time. He had a gym session at 8am and he knew Ian's hurdle group started at 8.30am. After throwing up then popping two painkillers, he felt a little better. Turning his cell on, he discovered 23 text messages and 7 voicemails. He wondered if he should just climb back into bed for the day.

Was he right in expecting his boyfriend to be there when he needed him? Yes. Did he overreact? Probably. They had said some fucked up shit to each other and Mickey regretted it. He knew he shouldn't just push Ian away when things got tough—and this was the second time he'd pulled that shit—but he also thought it was best they had some time apart. Mickey's mind was constantly circling back to Terry, Johnson had added another pressure, and he didn't want to hide who he was anymore. As far as he was concerned, everyone could go fuck themselves. He liked a man's dick in his ass. He liked hard muscles and square jaws, and he was sick of pretending otherwise. Why people cared so much about what two consenting men did with their bodies, he didn't know. Mickey fell back down on his bed. Fuck, he loved Ian. The red hair, the freckles, the puppy dog eyes. He fucking loved all of it. Shit, what was he going to do?

Thirty minutes later, Mickey entered the gym. It was 8.20am, and he was prepared for Garcia to grill him for being late. As he approached his teammates, they all stopped what they were doing and stared at him.

"The fuck's going on? We're not still continuing on from yesterday, are we?" It was only then he realised Johnson wasn't there.

Fryer stepped forward, voice low, "You know exactly what the fuck's going on, bitch. You always get your *boyfriend* to fight your battles for you?"

"Milkovich, a word please," Coach Garcia said, calling him over to a quiet corner of the gym. Mickey followed, both fear and anger prickling at his skin. "Mickey, I don't want you talking to or seeing Mr. Gallagher until this is sorted out. This is not a request—you need to think about yourself here, your scholarship. Once things have settled, we'll take it from there. Understood?"

What the fuck had Ian done? Mickey felt nausea rise into his throat, so he took a few deep breaths to stop himself from vomiting all over the gym floor. "Coach, I don't know what the fuck you're talking about. I haven't spoken to Ian since yesterday afternoon."

"You don't know?"

"No, can you fucking tell me," he said, agitation mounting.

"Johnson claims Gallagher followed him on campus last night and then attacked him for no reason."

"Oh, there was a reason all right. Jesus Christ. What's happening now?"

"Mr Robinson will handle the situation today. Were you involved in this Mickey?"

Mickey tried to think fast, not sure if mentioning what Johnson had done would make things better

or worse for Ian. Unable to decide on the spot, he answered the best he could, “I wasn’t involved in any attack on Johnson. I can’t imagine Ian would be either.”

“Okay, I’m glad you’re not involved. Now get on with your program, you’ve got some catching up to do this morning.”

Mickey couldn’t concentrate—between the hangover and worrying about Ian, it was useless. When he made it to the locker room, he grabbed his cell and shot off a text…

You okay? The fuck did you do?

Thirty minutes later when he sat down in class, there was still no answer.

*****

Ian was sitting in Mr. Robinson’s office after being summoned in just after 8am. He tapped his fingers on the chair as he waited to hear his fate. The door flinging open behind him, almost made him jump, then Robinson sat down at his desk and opened the file he was holding.

“Mr. Gallagher, I’m rather disappointed to see you in my office about such a serious matter. Would you like the opportunity to state your side of the story?”

“What happened to innocent until proven guilty?”

“CCTV cameras happened.”

Fuck! He should have realised there would be camera’s on every part of campus. They’d been in a secluded spot behind a building, but he was screwed if they had the incident on film. “Would it make any difference if I told my side, because Johnson isn’t innocent here either.”

“Ian, surely I don’t need to tell you how serious this is?”

“Let’s just say Johnson, with the help of his buddies, were dishing out a load of homophobic bullshit towards my boyfriend yesterday. But maybe you don’t care about that. Maybe you think that’s okay, and Mickey should man up and take it, yeah?” Ian did nothing to hide his animosity towards the man.

Robinson sat back in his chair and squinted his eyes. “Ian, no one is going to excuse Johnson if he was expressing homophobic slurs, but that doesn’t excuse you from using physical violence as a response.”

“So you’re telling me if I came in here to report what Johnson did, I’d be heard. That I’d be taken seriously? Because the last time I came in here to make a complaint about homophobia, I was advised to hide who I am. I’m gay Mr Robinson. And so is Mickey. And if that makes you uncomfortable, then maybe you’re the one with the problem.”

“That’s enough, Mr. Gallagher. I’ve spent the morning advocating for you, and I won’t tolerate any more of your accusations. Now, Mr. Johnson has agreed to not press criminal charges in exchange for a written apology, plus you must agree to keep a minimum of fifty feet away, and complete 100 hours of community service on campus.”

“I’m not writing that prick an apology, he’s the one who needs to apologise to Mickey.”

Mr Robinson stood up and leaned across the desk, “Mr Gallagher, I strongly suggest you take this offer. Johnson wanted your scholarship revoked and I talked him down. He *will* lay criminal charges if you don’t agree.”

Ian already knew he was going to seek new scholarships for him and Mickey the moment he made it back to his dorm. But he didn’t want to get arrested, didn’t want to miss Worlds. Standing up, he placed his hands on the desk and leaned in close, so he was inches from Robinson’s face. “Fine, you’ve got yourself a deal. But I’m not hiding who I am anymore. Not hiding my relationship.”

“I wouldn’t do that if I were you.”

“Is that a threat?” he asked through gritted teeth.

“Is he worth your scholarship? Your career?”

Ian stepped away from the desk, then made his way to the door, opening it before turning to look back at Robinson. “He’s worth everything!”

By the time Ian made it back to his dorm room, he had the plan outlined. It brought him both a sense of empowerment and a newfound hope that he and Mickey could work through their issues.

Mickey had texted him while he was still in Robinson’s office and it warmed his heart to see those words, to know Mickey still cared about him. Ian wasn’t deterred by the fact they were only nineteen - he knew they were meant to be. Just like he knew he was going to be an Olympic Champion one day. The certainty of it pumped through his veins as resolutely as his blood.

Sitting down at his desk ready to put things in motion, he paused to send Mickey a text…

Mick I’m ok. And I miss you. Just give me 24 hours to prove myself - that’s all I ask!

*****

It had been 21 hours and 37 minutes, but who was counting. Mickey was giving Ian his 24 hours as requested but he missed his boyfriend. As the minutes ticked by, the less he needed Ian to prove himself. Ian taking care of the Johnson situation had already told him everything he needed to know. At first, he had been pissed—he could look after himself and didn’t need Ian stepping in for him. If he had wanted to risk his scholarship and beat the shit out of Johnson, he would have. His attitude changed when he realized Ian had risked his scholarship, risked going to Worlds to defend him. And it made him hard. Like he wanted to ride Ian’s dick until his ass hurt, and then some.

Truthfully, he didn’t want to keep their relationship a secret, but he thought maybe they could compromise - Mickey could be an ‘out’ athlete that declined to talk about his relationship. It wasn’t perfect, but he was willing to make it work. He wanted to be with Ian—and not just at college—he wanted them to be together in the long term. Yeah, he was fucking dick-whipped by a pale, freckly, ginger. His phone vibrated, and he grabbed it with way too much enthusiasm…

Meet me at the Track—2pm sharp. It’s important—please come.

It was 12.30pm. He would be there with fucking bells on.

*

As Mickey approached the track, he noticed all was not as it should be for 2pm on a Thursday. There was a small crowd of people gathered on the field near the shot-put area. They weren't athletes, and they weren't college kids. They all had their phones out and were facing a lectern. *What the fuck was going on?* Then he noticed the local tv station van as a reporter and cameraman hopped out and headed onto the track.

Mickey followed them, his eyes settling on a very nervous-looking Ian as he moved from amongst the gathered crowd to stand behind the lectern. Mickey moved to the back of the group, frowning at Ian as he tried to work out what his boyfriend was doing. As Ian reached up to adjust the microphone Mickey noticed the swollen, red, knuckles.

"Thank you everyone for coming today on such short notice. My name is Ian Gallagher, and I am a student here at Texas A & M on a track and field scholarship. I am currently ranked number one in the world in the under 20 men's 400m hurdles and in less than three weeks I will represent the United States in the World Junior Championships in Poland. And I'm gay."

Ian cleared his throat before continuing, "The last couple of weeks have been very challenging for me and my boyfriend. After competing at Nationals, and while waiting to board a flight home, I kissed my boyfriend in our team uniform. There is a rule that forbids students to do so while dressed in uniform, but it is commonly broken both on, and off, campus, and I have never heard of a single student being chastised or reported for such behavior. My boyfriend and I were firmly warned by my coach—Coach Wells - and the following day I discovered he had reported me to the Head of Athletics—Mr. Taylor Robinson. Mr. Robinson then proceeded to strongly advise me to hide my sexuality and my relationship, or I would be unlikely to have a successful career or secure any sponsorship."

Mickey could hear the whispered disapproval of some reporters in the crowd.

"Mr. Gallagher, I am here representing the Human Rights Campaign, will you be taking questions today?"

"Yes, certainly, once I finish." Mickey moved a few feet so he was more to the side, but closer to the front. Ian looked over at him with a strained smile, and Mickey knew Ian was terrified and in need of reassurance. So Mickey smiled and nodded his approval, Ian picking up his speech notes and continuing.

"Mr. Robinson stated that hiding my sexuality was the only way to protect my brand and warned me if I was out, I would become known as the gay hurdler and not acknowledged for my talent. I believe that both Coach Wells and Mr. Robinson discriminated against both me and my boyfriend and should be removed from their positions here at Texas A & M. I trust that the college does not align with their way of thinking and will take action to rectify this situation and support the rights of all LGBT+ students. But most importantly, I wish to address my boyfriend—Mickey Milkovich—who is our Under 20 National Champion in discus." Ian motioned towards Mickey and everyone turned to look at him. Mickey's palms started to sweat as he looked from the reporters, then back to Ian.

"Mickey, if Texas A & M don't want us, and Nike and Adidas don't want us, then I say fuck 'em. Because I love you, and I'm proud of you, and I'm never going to hide it another day in my life. Can you forgive me?"

For a few seconds Mickey was rooted to the spot as Ian looked at him with big puppy dog eyes full of love and fear and hope. Then he moved forward with purpose, Ian meeting him halfway as their

lips connected and Ian cradled his face like he would never let him go. Mickey could hear a few claps and whistles in the background, and he thought that was kind of cool.

*

After their moment in the spotlight, everything had turned to chaos. While they were answering the reporter's questions, one of the sprint coaches appeared and ordered the reporters off campus. Within fifteen minutes they were arguing with Robinson, and thirty minutes after that they were in the Deans office. The moment Ian mentioned the Human Rights Campaign had attended, the Dean stopped talking. Mickey didn't know how Ian had pulled it off, but the look on the Deans face told him they were now the ones in a position of power.

When they finally entered Ian's dorm room hours later, his smug boyfriend said, "Think we'll be getting an official apology soon. The local tv station was there, sports reporters, lgbt+ groups. There's no way the college wants to be seen as supporting sexual orientation discrimination. Plus, they don't want a lawsuit on their hands."

"What? You think we could sue them?"

"Fuck yeah, when I spoke to the HRC rep he said we should take it further."

"Should we?"

"If Wells and Robinson lose their jobs, we get a public apology, and our scholarships are protected, then that's all I need. But if you…"

"Nah, that's good enough for me. But what about Johnson?"

"That fucker won't be bothering you again. Told him I'd bury him if he did."

Mickey sidled up to his boyfriend, then grabbed his hips and pulled their bodies flush together. "You did, did ya, tough guy?"

"Uh huh," Ian said, before leaning in and peppering kisses up his neck and ending with a searing kiss to his lips.

"I actually meant; will you still get punished for what you did?"

"I certainly hope the fucker doesn't change his mind and go to the cops, but I already signed the agreement this morning and his signature was on it too. I have to write him an apology, stay away from the fucker, and do 100 hours of community service—if we're still here."

"The fuck you mean, if we're still here?"

"Made a ton of calls yesterday. I've got us three provisional offers if we want to leave this place."

"You serious? Both of us."

"Yeah, Mick, told them we're a package deal. We are, aren't we?"

"Yeah, we are," he said, voice softening as his cock hardened. "Let me look at your hand." Ian showed him his hand, knuckles swollen and a nasty shade of red. "Didn't know you could throw a punch, Gallagher. Rumors say you knocked him out cold. That true?"

“Yep, was fucking pissed.”

“Perhaps you would have done alright growing up Southside after all. You’re full of surprises.” Mickey kissed gently across Ian’s damaged knuckles, never breaking eye contact, teasing.

“Mickeeey,” Ian sighed, “Come on, wanna fuck you so bad.”

Mickey couldn’t help but chuckle. Ian was desperate, like a kid in a candy store. “Well, what are you waiting for? Get to it.”

They went at it like rabbits—Ian bent him over the desk and fucked him hard and fast. They didn’t even last ten minutes.

Realizing they were starving, they ordered uber eats and talked about their final competition next weekend before they were due to leave for Worlds. Ian told him his old coach from back home had agreed to fly in and help him with his final preparations. Mickey was glad, Ian needed that support right now.

Mickey couldn’t concentrate while they watched Netflix. Laying in Ian’s arms while getting a scalp massage was incredibly distracting. Then they did something new. Mickey topped Ian. They took it slow because Ian had rarely bottomed, but Mickey enjoyed it more than he thought he would. Ian all vulnerable and submissive under him was something he didn’t know he needed until he was balls deep in and Ian was needily moaning his name.

They slept soundly in a tangle of limbs.

Ian woke him in deep in the night with his mouth around his cock. He reached down under the sheets to run his hands through Ian’s hair as his cock hardened under that sinful tongue. “Oh, Ian, fuck that feels good.” He reached for the lube as Ian licked his way up his stomach and bit gently at his nipples.

“Need you again, baby,” Ian said, just before he licked sensually into his mouth. Mickey loved Ian’s body on top of him, their cocks rubbing together, pre-cum leaking onto their abs. Mickey dropped the lube on the bed so he could grasp Ian’s ass and pull him closer. The room was dark, only a slither of light sneaking through the crack in the curtains. Mickey wanted it slow and deep. Mickey wanted Ian to make love to him.

“Need you too,” he breathed into Ian’s mouth as they continued to rock against each other. Fumbling in the dark, he located the lube again and pushed Ian back, sitting up too. Mickey coated his fingers and spread the lube over Ian’s cock, then gathered some more, spreading it over his hole before pushing two fingers inside to get himself ready. He was still open enough from earlier, and he was grateful because he wanted Ian too much to wait any longer. Ian was kissing up his neck and humming with desire.

As he laid back down, he wiped the excess lube off on the sheets and spread his legs open. There was something about the action that made him feel sexy, and he teased at his own nipples as Ian firmly ran his hands up his thighs.

“Just a little taste first, Mickey,” Ian purred, lowering down and nuzzling his cheek against his cock. A warm tongue licked up the underside of his shaft and then those perfect lips sank down around his throbbing cock. Ian swirled his tongue on the way up, licking into the slit and moaning loudly. “Tell me baby, you want my cock inside you? You all open for me. Waiting.”

“Fuck yeah, Ian. Come on, do me slow and deep.” Mickey felt the tip of Ian’s cock tease at his

hole. “Ian, stop teasing babe, my ass is aching for it.”

“Shit, Mickey. Keep talking like that and I’ll blow.”

Ian finally pushed inside him, their satisfied moans deep and primal. Mickey pulled Ian down into his arms and locked his feet around Ian’s waist. Ian thrusted in and out of him with a roll of his hips that was sexy as fuck. Their mouths remained joined the entire time, Mickey losing himself in the measured rocking of their bodies. They made love for a long time, their orgasm’s creeping up on them and resulting in whole body bliss. Mickey released hot between them as Ian pulsed deep inside him, body shaking in Mickey’s arms.

With Ian still inside of him, Mickey looked up into those beautiful green eyes and whispered, “Ian, I love you.”

A smile erupted across Ian’s face and his eyes filled with tears. “Mickey, when you didn’t say it back earlier today, I thought-”

“You thought wrong. I didn’t say it because all those reporters were there. But I do. Have known for a while. I’m totally in love with your ginger ass.”

“Just my ass?” Ian teased.

Mickey chuckled, “No you numb nuts, all of you.”

Ian’s face grew serious again, “I love you so fucking much, Mick.”

“Kiss me.”

Mickey never had to ask Ian twice for kisses, and he was rewarded with one full of emotion. As a single tear landed on his cheek, Mickey knew his heart had never been so full.

Chapter End Notes

I'm thinking about releasing the first chapter of my new fic next week - but I want to get the next chapter of this fic finished first. New fic is enemies to lovers and it's going to be flirty, funny, and definitely smutty! Keep a look out for it - it's going to be a fun ride! Don't forget you can user subscribe if you like my fics!

Thank you for reading - please don't forget to kudos, subscribe and comment!

Rachael x
PS: A miracle happened and they ended our lockdown (well for now anyway, could be another around the corner for all anyone knows!) but the good news is my business is open again! Thank you to all the people who commented with their best wishes - it meant a lot!!

Crescendo

Chapter Notes

I had an awesome time writing this chapter - really hope you enjoy it!!
Spikes = the shoes sprinters wear for races.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

10 DAYS BEFORE 'WORLDS' BEGINS…

Mickey was sweating in the oppressive afternoon heat as he exited the discus cage after equalling his PB just moments before. It was their last Saturday competition—on home soil—before they would head off to Poland for Worlds in only four short days. It had been nine days since the monumental press conference, and it had been a whirlwind of activity.

The Texas A & M LGBT+ alliance group had gotten behind them in a big way, even setting up an Instagram page for people to follow. With the HRC's involvement, the story had gone far and wide, pressure mounting on the College to take action. The LGBT+ community all over the country had coined the hashtags #JusticeforIanandMickey, #letIanandMickeykiss, and #outandproudoncampus. When Mickey decided he didn't want to hide his relationship anymore, he had no clue that would lead to the entire country getting a bird's-eye view. But he was doing okay and almost enjoyed the follow-up interviews he and Ian had done. Ian was most likely going to be a world-famous athlete one day, so he guessed he better get used to it.

Perhaps the highlight of the week was Nike getting in touch to let them know they were keen to sign them the moment they went pro, and if they were still together, had a kick ass marketing campaign in mind for them as a couple. Mickey was worried Ian would get pissed about it as it wasn't how he wanted to be labelled - as a gay athlete. But Ian surprised him by saying that he was coming around to the idea after receiving so many messages from younger athletes who saw them as role models.

Mickey couldn't believe how far he'd come—falling in love with Ian and being 'out' had changed him at a cellular level. The idea of doing a sexy photoshoot with Ian for Nike appealed to all his secret teenage fantasies. And, hell, maybe there was a kid out there just like him who had a shit family and was scared, and seeing him and Ian would give them the courage to stand up and be free. Four years ago, Mickey thought he was fucked for life and would spend his years banging random guys in dark alleys between stints in prison. That one day back in high school when he picked up a discus had changed his life. He owed Coach Anderson more than he could every repay.

A week after the press conference, the college made a public apology and removed both Robinson and Wells from their positions. They pledged to implement diversity training for all faculty members and to consult with the LGBT+ alliance on ways to improve inclusion on campus. Mickey was proud of Ian and thanked him in every position he could think of, twice. Were there negatives? Yes. They had dealt with both online trolls and in person assholes, and they knew that standing up for their rights came with a price tag. So far, the positives outweighed the negatives.

Ian's old coach—Coach Smythe—had flown in a week ago, and the change in Ian was palpable. Mickey became acutely aware of the damage Coach Wells had inflicted now that he was witnessing a happy, motivated and energy-charged Ian. It was conclusive evidence of how the mind affected the body. Ian was due to compete soon, and Mickey had a feeling he was about to see Ian hurdle at his best, and he was fucking excited for his boyfriend.

The only bump in the road in the last nine days happened last night, Mandy calling to let them know Terry had gone on an overnight drug run with one of his uncles and a cousin. Mandy assured them it was a legit drug run, after listening to them plan it all week. Even so, he and Ian had argued over it. Mickey wanted to carry the gun with him today, and Ian fought him tooth and nail, then stuck his chin out and gave him the silent treatment.

The standoff ended when he agreed to leave the gun in the dorm room in exchange for riding Ian's face. After he came all over boyfriend's chest, Ian laughed his tits off, because apparently, he'd been fantasising about eating him out in that position. That made Mickey hard again, so he blew Ian and then jumped on his dick and rode him in reverse cowboy. Their arguments always ended in the hottest sex, and he wouldn't be surprised if they got into a pattern of riling each other up, just so they could fuck each other senseless.

As Mickey packed up his gear, he noticed the hurdlers being led out onto the track. He needed to move his ass. He wanted to grab a cold sports drink and have time to find a place near the finish line to watch his boyfriend's race.

*****

As the marshal led the hurdlers out of the call room and onto the track, Ian was still peeved he hadn't been able to watch Mickey throw. Since sharing how they really felt, things had stepped up a notch, and they were closer than ever. They exchanged 'I love you's' every day and Ian couldn't imagine a time when he would get sick of it. The media frenzy was overwhelming, but they were keeping their focus on each other and their final preparations for Worlds.

Having his old Coach with him was a godsend, and he finally felt like he could perform at his best—and having Mickey by his side made it even more meaningful. He squinted, trying to find Mickey at the discus cage, rewarded with a wave, followed by a thumbs up and a beaming smile. Mickey must have performed well. He pumped his arm up in victory and smiled back. Ian knew Mickey would watch his race and be waiting for him near the finish line.

Once they were given the cue from the marshal, he took his place in lane four and completed his practice start. He felt fucking good for the first time in months. Glancing over at his coach by the fence, they locked eyes and his coach nodded his approval. It had always been their tradition, and he had missed the security of having his coach close by.

Then everything moved quickly; the announcer introduced them to the crowd, then the marshal blew his whistle and said, "On your marks."

Ian did his customary two tuck jumps and slapped his thighs to get his muscles firing, then settled down into the blocks. He was excited but in control. He was ready to unleash the adrenaline and he knew in his gut this was the start of his comeback.

"Set."

He breathed in and lifted into position.

The gun fired and he shot out of the blocks with the perfect reaction time. Then he let his body take over. By the time he rounded the last bend and hit the front straight, he knew he was making good time. Part of him wanted to glance at the timer but he stayed on course and pushed through the lactic acid pain screaming at his body to stop. But there was no stopping him today. Ian Gallagher was back. Crossing the finish line, he glanced up at the timer before coming to a stop and falling to his knees, his lungs burning and nausea gripping at his stomach. The timer was often a few seconds off—but he knew he might have just PB'd for the first time in a long time.

When he raised his head, he watched the electronic score board light up with the placings. He had done it—and he wasn't too far off the under 20 world record. Tears welled up in his eyes as both exhilaration and relief flooded his veins. Coach Smythe was cheering and calling out to him and he forced his muscles into action and jogged over to the fence, his Coach pulling him into a bear hug and slapping him on the back.

"Knew you could do it, Ian. So proud of you. Go find your man and celebrate."

Ian thanked his coach, ripped his spikes off his feet and headed off the track in search of Mickey. He knew where he would be, because they each had a spot they stood when they watched each other compete. But when he got there, there was no sign of Mickey. At first he didn't panic, probably they had just missed each other in the crowd, Mickey had possibly come closer, eager to get to him sooner. Ian doubled back to the athlete's gate. Still no Mickey. Seeing a friend, he asked, "Hey, you seen Mickey?" They hadn't.

After a few minutes passed, he started to panic. With his heart thudding fast and loud, he stood rooted to the spot as he imagined the worst. Realising time was of the essence, he stopped a teammate and told them to call 911 and send the police for an attack or a kidnapping. Fuck, he didn't know what he was facing. Then he dropped his spikes and bolted bare foot toward the stadium exit.

As he ran, he tried to think where Mickey could be. Would he have gone outside the stadium willingly with his father? Ian knew the answer was yes. Mickey would instinctively lead his father away, if only to protect Ian. The only place he could think of was the isolated area behind the grandstand. Students sometimes hung out there getting high and doing stupid shit, so that's where he headed.

The moment he turned the corner, he saw Mickey in the distance—the man he loved - getting punched in the face by his own father.

"Stop, you motherfucker!" he screamed as he closed the distance. Mickey was fighting back, but he wasn't winning. There were two other men who Ian understood to be an uncle and a cousin, standing back, but egging Terry by shouting encouragement. So much so that they didn't even see him coming as he ploughed straight into Terry Milkovich, ripping him off Mickey and knocking him to the ground.

Then all fucking hell broke loose. Ian was grabbed from behind before he could get a punch in, so he kicked Terry in the ribs as he was getting dragged away. Ian watched Mickey grab Terry by the shirt and lift his fist, ready to deliver a punch. And then Terry pulled out a gun and pointed it at Mickey's head.

He heard someone yell a mournful, "Don't shoot," before realising it had come from him. Mickey let go of his father and backed away. Terry kept the gun aimed at Mickey as he stood up. Ian had stopped fighting—the two men had his arms held behind his back. He knew he had to distract Terry, delay until the cops showed up. If they showed up. He struggled to swallow the thick lump of fear that was stuck in his throat and then spoke, "What are going to do? Kill him right here?

You'll never get away with it."

Terry suddenly turned and pointed the gun at Ian's chest instead. "Just gonna kill you, you fuckin' ginger faggot!"

"Dad," Mickey warned, edging closer to his father.

"Move the fuck back Mickey, or I'll put a bullet between your faggot eyes too. So this is the fuckin' pussy you like to stick your dick in?"

Mickey moved further away from Terry but edged closer to Ian. They glanced at each other for a split second and Ian saw guilt and fear in Mickey's eyes and all he could think of was how much he loved him. How much Mickey deserved the world, and that he'd wanted nothing more than to give it to him. But it didn't seem like that was going to happen. Terry Milkovich had come to separate them. Permanently.

Terry cocked the pistol. The sound of it caused him to take a sharp intake of breath.

Mickey stepped in front of the gun, shielding him.

"Mickey, no!" he said, thrashing against the two men holding him in place.

"You'll have to fuckin' kill me first, Pops. I'm gay and nothing you do or say will change who I am. I love him and I don't give a shit how that makes you feel. So get it over with - fuckin' kill me or fuck off!"

"Police, freeze!" The officer's voice was so loud Ian jerked in response. Turning his head, he saw two police officers with guns drawn and aimed at Terry.

"Drop your weapon and place your hands on your head." Ian couldn't see Terry, Mickey, holding his protective position.

"Final warning! Drop your weapon or we *will* shoot."

Ian heard the gun land on the concrete and Mickey letting out a deep breath.

The two cops began closing in. "On your stomach now! Hands behind your head."

Terry knelt down, muttering under his breath, "This isn't fuckin' over. No son of mine is gonna be a fuckin' faggot."

Ian felt the two men release his arms as the cops moved in—one cuffing Terry as the other rounded up Terry's brother and nephew and got them down on the ground too. Mickey turned to him and they fell into each other's arms. He clung onto Mickey, burying his face into his neck, breathing in his scent as Terry and his mates were led away towards the cop car.

"Why the fuck did you do that? Thought I was going to lose you," he whispered, voice shaking and tears spilling down his cheeks. His legs could barely hold him up now the danger had passed. Pulling back, he held Mickey's face in his hands and looked into his eyes. "Don't ever fucking risk your life for me again, you hear me?"

"Just try to stop me. Always gonna protect you, Ian. Love you."

"Fuck, I love you too."

Ian pulled Mickey in and kissed him hard, pressing their lips together, never wanting to separate.

*****

When they entered Ian's dorm room, it was almost 11pm. Mickey was nearly asleep on his feet and Ian wasn't doing much better. After Terry, his uncle and cousin were arrested, an ambulance arrived and checked over his injuries. He had taken worse beatings and told the EMT's to fuck off. Ian had fussed and carried on, and that made Mickey feel warm inside, even if he pretended otherwise.

They had been taken to the police station, where they were interviewed separately and gave formal witness statements. Someone told them they may need to seek therapy, and to watch out for signs of PTSD and trauma. Mickey almost wanted to laugh in the woman's face but elected not to tell her it wasn't the first time his father had beaten him or held a gun to his head. But he knew such an experience was new to Ian, and he worried his boyfriend may struggle to cope in the coming weeks and months. The chances of Ian's panic attacks resurfacing a terrible, but likely, possibility.

Before they left the precinct, the police officer in charge told them the college had confirmed there was CCTV camera footage. Mickey was too tired to take everything in, but they promised Terry would be returned to Chicago and remain in custody for violating his probation and carrying an unregistered, concealed weapon. The assault and battery charges, the possible hate crime, and all associated charges committed in Texas may be tried in either state—but that would be something decided upon between the two district attorneys in each state. He was too fucking tired to take the details in, his mind shutting off the moment they said his father would remain in custody.

Now they were finally alone, and he could relax. He just wanted to sleep in Ian's arms, but he also wanted a shower. Wanted to wash off any remnants of his father's punches and disgusted looks. Taking Ian's hand, he led them into the bathroom. They brushed their teeth, looking at each other as they stood side by side in front of the bathroom mirror. In silence, they stripped off and entered the shower. Ian shampooed his hair and carefully washed away the dried blood on his face. His eye was swollen, the delicate tissue around his eye blue and his lip had been split open but was knitting back together surprisingly well. Ian inspected the bruising on his right ribs and his abdomen and then held him.

They remained under the water until the hot become warm, Ian rocking them gently as he stroked up and down Mickey's back. Once dry, they climbed into bed and cuddled facing each other. "Sorry I missed your race," he said. He knew Ian didn't mind, but he did. If only he hadn't gone to buy that sports drink, Terry may never have found him.

Ian chuckled, eyes closed and already half asleep. "I forgive you. I PB'd." Ian opened his eyes and smiled softly at him.

"Knew you would. Don't let this fuck anything up. Worlds is yours for the taking. And I promise I won't miss that race."

"More worried about you, baby. Your body is going to be sore for days, weeks."

"Not a softy like you, Gallagher. I'll take a few days off and be good as new. Not letting that asshole take my future away. I'm gonna use this to motivate me. Are you okay, though?"

"Feel pretty grateful right now. Nearly losing you has put my priorities in order real fucking fast. But don't think you're off the hook. Once we've slept for twelve hours, you're gonna hear it from me."

“Sure thing, tough guy. Now shut the fuck up and kiss me before I fall asleep.”

Ian kissed him softly. So slowly. So lovingly. He melted against Ian’s chest, relishing how it felt to have those strong arms holding him tight. They gently swiped their tongues together a few times, then settled down for sleep. He nuzzled under Ian’s chin and welcomed Ian’s thigh between his own.

“I love you,” he murmured against Ian’s warm skin.

“Love you too, babe,” Ian whispered.

The last thing he remembered was Ian pressing lips to his forehead as exhaustion won out.

WORLD JUNIORS: BYDGOSZCZ, POLAND….

DAY 3 (400m HURDLES – HEATS)

The U.S. team had flown into Poland 6 days before competition, settled into the athlete village and continued their tapered training. Ian was happy to work with the US team's National hurdle coach, and Mickey hit it off with the throws coach. Ian had a difficult three days ahead of him, with his heat, semi-final and final races across days three to five of competition. Mickey wasn’t competing until day five, when he would have his qualifying round, and if all went to plan, his final on day six. Fortunately, Mickey’s qualifying round was in the morning, so he could watch the hurdle final in the afternoon. Ian wasn’t stupid though, there was no guarantee everything would go to plan—he could false start or fall on a hurdle and not even make it to the semi-finals. Life could be a cruel bitch that way, and Ian had seen track and field take out the strongest of athletes.

Mickey had recovered remarkably well from Terry’s attack, back to full training load by the time they arrived in Poland. Athlete’s had been able to put in a request for a roommate and they were pleasantly surprised to find they were bunking together. Maybe no one was game to deny them, after what he’d orchestrated at college. Ian didn’t give a shit one way or the other, they were together, and that meant Mickey kept him calm.

He knew Mickey was in the grandstand watching him, and he glanced up to see his boyfriend looking anxious and fidgety. Ian loved that Mickey cared enough to get nervous for him. And he *was* nervous. The waiting was the worst fucking part. There were 7 heats and the top 3 from each race progressed to the semi-finals. He was in the sixth heat - heat 5 currently mid-way through. So far, athletes had performed as expected, the only shock being a UK hurdler - who had been tipped to make the final - being disqualified in heat 2.

Once heat 5 concluded and they got the all-clear from the marshal to take their practice start, Ian focussed solely on his race. It was imperative that he didn’t go too hard in the heat if he was going to have the energy to get close to the world record in two days. He needed to run a controlled race. His dream was so close to coming true—he was here at the World Junior Athletics Championships. After all that had happened the last few months, it was a blessing, and he was going to take full advantage of it.

Ian waved into the camera as he got introduced, excitement and pride bubbling up from the inside.

“On your marks.”

Two tuck jumps and then he slapped his thighs and backed up into his blocks.

“Set.”

The gun fired, and he took off at a controlled speed—sticking to his race plan was important. He felt good as he approached the last 50 metres. One other athlete was ahead of him, and that was okay. He slowed down in the run out, no other athletes threatening his easy 2nd place. Bending forward, Ian placed his hands on his knees and worked on regaining a normal breathing pattern. One race down, two to go.

Mickey was at the athlete gate as he exited the track, and they stole a quick kiss before the athletes were all herded back to the call room to change. When he emerged, he pulled a stunned Mickey around the corner of the building and pressed their bodies together, kissing him with abandonment.

“Someone’s all riled up,” Mickey said, when Ian pulled away, gasping for breath.

“I just competed at Worlds, Mickey. Been dreaming about representing my country, wearing this uniform since I was ten.”

“And you look fuckin’ hot in it too,” Mickey purred in his ear.

“Yeah? Maybe I’ll fuck you in it after we finish competing.” Ian pushed his pelvis forward, letting Mickey feel his half hard cock through the thin fabric.

“Fuck yeah. Now go do your cool down so we can rest back in our room.”

Ian reluctantly peeled his body off Mickey’s and turned towards the warm-up track, receiving a slap to his ass from his chuckling boyfriend.

DAY 4 (400m HURDLES—SEMI-FINALS)

Mickey had let go of the Terry incident. He assumed he would have to face it at some point, but for now he had wrangled his thoughts down to include only athletics and Ian. His body had been sore as hell for about 5 days, and then the stiffness and tenderness faded. Ian had been glued to his side, fussing over him, and talking way too fucking much. But that was Ian, and he loved his ginger.

Even though he never expected to win Nationals, let alone make it onto the U. S team, he had set himself the goal of making the final. He was currently ranked 9th in the world, so it was more than doable. Not competing until day 5 of competition was sending him crazy, the butterflies building each day. And watching Ian hurdle was the fucking worst. His palms would sweat, his heart would pound, and he imagined everything that could go wrong. If he has to watch Ian at the Olympics in the future, he’ll be popping Ativan to get through it.

As he took a seat in the third row of the grandstand, directly in front of the finish line, he tried to calm himself. It had become a ritual, and he wasn’t past yelling at people to move if the seat he wanted in the third row was already occupied. Ian was out on the track and the first of the three semi-finals had just begun. Ian’s semi was next. Only the top two in each semi-final had a guaranteed place in the final. Mickey now knew everything there was to know about hurdles—including that some athletes would go damn hard in the semi-finals to secure a place in the final. Ian needed to progress without overloading his body, so he could literally go for gold tomorrow. But he couldn’t go so slow as to risk not coming first or second. As a thrower, Mickey thought track events were fucking complicated.

Mickey watched Ian take his practice start, trying to read his boyfriend's mood. Everything took

way too fucking long—he willed the announcer to hurry up and introduce the athletes. He cheered when they announced Ian, and then nausea gripped at his stomach. The marshal blew the whistle, and Mickey held his breath. He exhaled once the race began and there were no false starts. Ian looked comfortable, and he seemed to be holding his first place without pushing. As they rounded the last bend, a Canadian athlete pushed hard and took the lead. Mickey murmured, 'fuck fuck fuck fuck,' under his breath as they approached the finish line. The Canadian athlete had a minor stumble over the last hurdle, and both he and Ian crossed the finish line in almost identical time.

Mickey was immediately up out of his seat and on his way down to the athlete's gate, eyes on the electronic board as he walked. He could see Ian had laid down on his back to recover. The times came up and Ian had won, and the time was fast. Most importantly, Ian would be allocated a good lane for the final.

As Ian made his way off the track, he grinned, and Mickey beamed proudly back at his boyfriend. His legs were still weak from adrenaline as Ian approached. "Congrats, babe," he said, once Ian was in earshot. Ian reached out to him, cupped his face and gave him a quick kiss before following the other athletes back to the call room.

Later that night, they hopped into bed early. Mickey was buzzing with the excitement of finally getting out on the field the next day, but Ian's mind and body needed rest for his big moment in the spotlight, so bed it was.

"How you feeling, babe?" Ian asked, squeezing his ass.

"I'm too fuckin' excited. Gotta pull it back a little. Focus just on the throws."

"You'll be great, Mick. I just know it. Can't wait to see you out there in your uniform—it really shows off your ass." Ian finished his sentence with a slap to Mickey's ass.

"Ow, you fucker. You doing okay? You feel ready?"

Ian leant in and kissed him before answering, "I am fatigued. Competing at this level, overseas, and three days in a row. Not gonna lie, it's a lot mentally and physically. But I believe I can do it. And having you by my side cheering me on makes it so much easier. Love you, babe."

"Love you, too. Now shut your eyes and get some sleep."

"Need to spoon you to do that. Turn over."

Mickey did as he was told, his entire body relaxing once they were slotted together and he had hold of Ian's hand. Ian placed a few kisses to the back of his neck, breathed him in and then settled. Whatever happened tomorrow, Mickey would be there for Ian and he knew Ian would be there for him.

DAY 5 (DISCUS QUALIFYING ROUND / 400 HURDLES – FINAL)

Ian had to plan his day carefully. Ideally, he wouldn't be at the track in the morning with a final scheduled for the afternoon, but there was no way he was going to miss Mickey's qualifying round. He had packed his food and water and planned on taking walks between Mickey's throws to stop himself from stiffening up. Mickey had tried to stop him from coming, saying he wouldn't be mad at all, knowing what was at stake, but Ian was having none of it. This was the man that had stepped

in front of a loaded gun to protect him.

Mickey was throwing fifth in qualifying group B, of which there were 23 athletes. To make it to the final, he just had to be in the top twelve of his group. This really was an easy task with Mickey's current world ranking, but Ian knew Mickey would be nervous as hell and appreciate the support. Ian sat back in the seats while the first three athletes took their throws, and then headed down to the fence line to be closer when his boyfriend was called.

Mickey looked over at him nervously as he approached the cage, and Ian nodded and smiled at him, letting him know he had this in the bag. Ian felt a tightness in his chest when he watched Mickey—it was a weird mix of nerves and pride and attraction. He enjoyed watching Mickey's muscles ripple, and the display of strength and skill. Mickey's tongue would dart out just before he threw, and Ian thought it was sexy as fuck.

The first throw was massive, and Ian cheered and clapped as a smirking Mickey exited the cage. Mickey came straight over to the fence to receive feedback from the coach and then joined him for a moment. "Going out hard, I see. You should be able to ease off now, yeah?" he asked, as he wrapped his hand around Mickey's neck and squeezed.

"One centimetre short of my PB, so yeah, think I'm good. Feel better now I've thrown once. You gonna stay? You should go stretch and eat between rounds."

"I will. Be back soon. So proud of you."

Ian smiled at his blushing boyfriend as Mickey backed away, then turned and jogged across the track to the discus area. Once Mickey was seated with the other athletes, Ian took a walk.

Ian returned for Mickey's other throws—his first throw remaining the best and keeping him in the top 4 of his qualifying group. At the end, once both qualifying groups were combined, Mickey was not only in the final, but was 7th overall. Ian found a quiet spot to kiss the shit out of his boyfriend.

*

Ian was standing on the starting line in lane four. He used all his willpower to block out everything other than what he came here to do. A decade of training and sacrifices had led to this moment in time, and it was his for the taking.

"On your marks."

Two tuck jumps.

Slap your quads.

Into the blocks.

You got this.

Breathe.

"Set."

The gun fired and he shot out like a bullet train. This was it, all or nothing; he couldn't leave an ounce of energy in his body if he was to break the record.

The first 200 metres was gone before he came back into the moment. His third bend was flawless.

He had passed everyone in lanes five to eight already, and the Jamaican athlete in lane five was his major competition. He drove hard around the last bend, using the angle to project himself forward. His body was suffering, legs like dead weights as he hauled his body over the second last hurdle. He could hear the Jamaican athlete puffing; he was closing the gap. In that moment he thought of his Dad and Coach Smythe and then Mickey. Then he heard Mickey cheering from the crowd, and he fought for a proper deep breath, allowing oxygen to fuel his muscles. He pushed on with everything he had, clearing the last hurdle and fighting for that finish line.

He crossed it, almost immediately falling to the ground. His guts were about to unload, and he tried to breathe through it. He was the world fucking under 20 champion. The gold medal winner.

The announcer came over the P. A system, “Congratulations to the United States athlete Ian Gallagher. The 400m hurdle champion, setting a new world record with a time of 48.01 seconds. His chest shuddered and tears stung at his eyes. The overriding emotion was relief. The Jamaican athlete congratulated him and helped him to stand. He waved a thank you to the crowd who were all cheering for him.

It was surreal, accept he’d never felt more alive, more full of emotion. If he had ever doubted this was what he wanted to do with his life, then he didn’t anymore. One day, he wanted to do this at the Olympics. Where was Mickey? He needed to call his Dad. Fucking hell, he couldn’t think straight.

An official pulled him over to the side, told him he was wanted for an interview. Shit, how was he going to string two words together? Then he spotted the U.S. team coach—and was pulled into the man’s embrace. “So proud, Ian. America will be so proud of you. You did it,” the coach said, slapping him on the back.

Then he spotted Mickey behind, waiting patiently, a tear rolling down his cheek. He reached across the fence and pulled Mickey in by his top, burying his face into his boyfriend’s neck. “I heard you cheering for me. It got me over the line, Mick. It did, you got me that world record.” He pulled back and kissed Mickey hard, cradling his face.

“Ian, it was all you. Fucking amazing race. Fuck, Ian. So proud of you.”

“Ian, sorry to interrupt, but can we just grab a few minutes to interview you for the live stream?” the reporter asked.

“Yeah, sure,” he answered, holding Mickey’s hand and not wanting to let go.

Mickey gently pulled his hand away, “Go Ian. Do your interview, babe.”

Ian wiped the tears off his cheeks and tried to compose his face.

“Okay Ian, my assistant will count us in 3, 2, 1 and then we’ll be streaming live. Just remember to keep it clean and smile.”

“Okay, sure thing.”

The cameraman moved in front of them and the assistant called 3, 2, 1.

“After an exciting 400 hurdle final, I have the new under 20 world champion, and new world record holder here with me - Ian Gallagher, representing the United States. Ian, how are feeling after breaking such a long-standing record?”

“I still don’t quite believe it; it hasn’t sunk in yet. I knew I had it in me, I had gotten close before

my hamstring injury, but it's an incredible feeling."

"And do you have anyone you would like to thank?"

"So many people, but especially my Dad for signing me up when I was a little kid and for all the time and money he's put into it. To my Coach, James Smythe, who has taught me everything about hurdling and always supported me. And to my boyfriend, Mickey, who helped me through my injury and has been by my side through a tough year."

"Speaking of Mickey Milkovich - the discus thrower - recently there was quite a controversy at your college over your relationship. Has that settled down now, and how do you two feel about being role models for LGBT+ youth?"

Ian chuckled, "Yes, it has settled, and we are glad we took a stand. Track and field, and sport in general, need more 'out' athletes. And if Mickey and I can pave the way in our sport, then that's something I can be proud of." Ian snuck a glance at Mickey and was rewarded when Mickey mouthed 'I love you' at him.

"That's great to hear, Ian. Congratulations once again on your win today."

"Thank you."

Ian thanked the interviewer again and headed off the track. Soon it would be medal presentation and he wanted to call his Dad and Coach Smythe and get more time with Mickey.

*

Ian was sitting astride Mickey's hips, as he massaged his boyfriend's back and shoulders. Mickey had already had a massage from the team physio, so this was for relaxation. Ian's dick was hard, and he wanted to fuck Mickey all night long, but that was not happening - Mickey needed to conserve his energy for tomorrow's final.

"Ian, I know what you're thinking, and I want to, too. But we can't. My ass will be sore if I let you get on me tonight."

"Sorry, am I being that obvious? It's all good, I can wreck your ass tomorrow night. I'm just so horny after my win."

"So blow me."

"You serious? Roll the fuck over," he said, climbing off Mickey's back and encouraging him to turn over. "Just lay back and enjoy it."

"Oh, I will. It's not every day I get my dick sucked by a world champion."

"Think it's going to be every day from now on." Ian pulled Mickey's boxers off and then his own.

"Fuck yeah," Mickey said, putting two pillows behind his head so he could watch the action.

Ian stopped talking and put his mouth to better use. Mickey sighed the moment his lips wrapped around his already hard cock. Ian loved the sounds Mickey made when he blew him and loved being the one to give him that much pleasure. Taking his own dick in hand, he began stroking as he bobbed up and down on Mickey's thick cock.

“God damn, Ian, are you jerking yourself?”

Ian hummed and looked up at Mickey, being rewarded with fingers threading through his hair. He continued, grabbing Mickey’s hips and keeping him pressed to the mattress as he increased his speed and sucked harder. Within minutes, Mickey was coming forcefully in Ian’s mouth, his moans unbridled. When Mickey stopped shuddering, Ian pulled off slowly and raised an eyebrow at his boyfriend.

“Fuck, that was good,” Mickey said, then glanced at Ian’s still hard cock. “Didn’t you cum?”

“Was hoping…”

Mickey smiled, “You’re such a dirty bitch. Where? Stomach, cock, back, face?”

“Ass. I’ll clean you up and tuck you into bed afterwards, I promise.”

Mickey flipped over and got onto his knees, face down on the pillow. “Come on then, paint my ass.”

Ian didn’t need to be told twice. He added some lube and sat up on his knees behind Mickey, jerking his cock fast. Pre-cum was dripping from the slit. Mickey reached back and spread his ass cheeks apart, and Ian groaned his approval. “I’m gonna fuck that pretty hole so hard tomorrow.”

“This hole?” Mickey asked, sliding one finger up his crack and teasing himself.

“Yeah, that’s mine, baby. Made for my dick.” Ian was so close, he pumped harder and thrust his hips forward.

“Want your cum and your dick and your tongue inside me. Come on, Ian, show me I’m yours. Give me your load.”

“Fuuuck!” he yelled as cum shot out over Mickey’s ass and across his back. Ian came so hard; three days of abstaining giving him a mind-blowing orgasm. Mickey was rubbing the cum around his hole, and Ian wondered if he could instantly get hard again. “Jesus, Mick. And I’m the dirty bitch?”

“Feels fuckin’ nice. Now clean me up, bitch.”

Ian laughed, getting off the bed and heading into the bathroom to grab a warm washcloth. He returned to the room and cleaned Mickey up, then himself, before depositing his boyfriend in bed as promised. “You want a water?” he asked.

“Nah, I’m good. Just want you.”

Ian climbed in and snuggled up against Mickey, peppering his face with kisses. “Your nerves okay?” he asked.

“Yeah, just excited to get out there and see what I can do. When I first got selected, I set myself the goal of making the final. And I’ve already done that. Now, I’m going to aim for a PB and just enjoy being out there.”

“You’re gonna smash it, babe. And I’m gonna be there every step of the way cheering you on. Tomorrow, I’m just going to be Mickey Milkovich’s boyfriend.”

Mickey went quiet, studying Ian’s face, then leant in and pressed their lips together. “I’d like that.”

DAY 6 (DISCUS FINAL) AND LAST DAY OF COMPETITION

Mickey had his fourth and final throw remaining. He had not been throwing well and was sitting in 10th position. Something about his spin was off; he had two subpar throws on the board and one 'no throw'. Ian had been positive and supportive as he had carried his disheartened body over to the fence after each throw. He wanted that PB - he didn't care about the placing - but he wanted to say he did his best in the most important competition of his life.

When they called his name, he looked over at Ian, who was nodding and clapping encouragement. "You got this, babe," Ian yelled. And it made him smile. Not so long ago, he would have been mortified if a man called him babe in public, now, it just filled his heart and made him relax. Ian was proud of him, and believed in him, and this was merely the beginning of their athletics careers.

Once in the circle, he focussed on his breathing, visualised his throw and took his time getting his body centered. He was at Worlds, he was representing his country, and he was fucking worth something. Winding back, he let his body take over, spinning and releasing. And that discus fucking soared. He held his breath, watching, waiting to see it land.

Mickey could hear Ian yelling, "Hell yeah, baby!" in the background and he smiled like a teenage girl. He exited the cage, watching the board for the official distance. When it came up, part of him wanted to cry—it was a 23-centimetre PB and it would push him up a few placings.

Running across the track, he went to Ian before the Coach and hugged his hot ginger over the fence. When Ian released him, he said, "You realise that throw just put you into 5th place?"

"Shit, I was thinking seventh, really?"

"Yep, and there are only two more athletes to throw. Look at the board, they've just updated the standings."

Mickey turned and saw for himself, his name up there in 5th place. Fifth best in the entire fucking world. "It was a massive PB. Wasn't thinking I could pull that out."

"Well, you did and we're gonna celebrate all night. Like all night, Mick. You're gonna be walking funny to the airport tomorrow. Now go see your Coach, he's looking pretty pleased."

He rose on his toes and gave Ian a quick peck, before moving onto his coach. There was now only one more athlete to throw, and if they didn't beat his distance, he would officially come in fifth place. His Coach congratulated him, and he headed back to the athlete area. Seven tense minutes later, he was 5th in the world. Life felt fucking good.

*

Mickey knew Ian wanted to go out with some of the team and celebrate, so he sucked it up because Ian deserved it. But less than 90 minutes later, Ian was happy to return to their room, lust winning out. Even though it was forbidden, they snuck a bottle of vodka into their room and drank too much too fast.

By 2 am, Ian had fucked him twice already, and they didn't look like slowing down anytime soon.

“Put your medal on, babe,” he said, tipsy as all fuck.

An unstable and naked Ian went to rummage through his bag for the aforementioned item. “Found it!” Ian yelled, holding it up with a goofy grin on his face.

“So fuckin’ put it on.”

As Ian placed it over his head, he said, “Oh baby, I wanna try something. But only if you promise not to laugh.”

Mickey burst out laughing. Jesus, was he actually drunk?

“Shut the fuck up, Mick,” Ian said, picking up a dining chair and placing in the middle of the room. “Now sit that pretty ass down.”

Ian grabbed his phone, squinted at the screen for a few seconds, and then a r’n’b song filled the room. Mickey sat his naked bum down, hoping there weren’t any germs on the chair. The moment Ian started rolling his body in front of him, he died and went to heaven. Jesus, fuck! In another life, Ian could have made a shit load of dough from stripping. Ian was running his hands down over his balls, then up his cock as it reached full hardness. Before Mickey could process what was happening, Ian had turned around and was sitting in his lap, circling his ass over Mickey’s dick. “Well, fuck me,” he said, sliding his hands around Ian’s body—grabbing that monster cock in one and tweaking a nipple with the other.

“That’s the aim. At least two more times before sunrise, baby. We can sleep on the plane.”

Ian stood up and turned around, sitting back down facing him this time. Mickey tugged on the medal, bringing Ian’s lips to his, and they kissed each other stupid. Mickey had a finger teasing at Ian’s hole, as Ian ground against him—their cocks leaking shamelessly together. Minutes went by before they pulled apart to breathe.

“Mickeeey,” Ian almost whined. “Want you to dance for me. Pleeeease baby.”

Mickey bit down on his lip. He was so fucking happy and so intoxicated, that it didn’t seem like a bad idea. “Don’t know how to do it like you,” he replied.

Ian pulled his medal off and placed it around Mickey’s neck instead. “Think you do. Anyone who can ride dick like you can, can dance.” Ian raised his eyebrows, challenging him, and then got up and sat on the bed, leaning against the headboard. “Come play, Mick,” Ian said, looking at him like an addict about to get his fix.

Mickey stood up, then climbed up on the bed, standing with one foot on each side of Ian’s legs. He began circling his hips like Ian did, stroking his own cock, as Ian looked him up and down, mouth hanging open in a lust haze. Moving in closer, he rolled and thrusted his hips, the tip of his cock almost touching Ian’s lips.

“Holy mother of god, Mick,” Ian said, then let his tongue dart out, trying to lap at his pre-cum.

Mickey felt sexy and powerful, finally letting his boyfriend lick into his slit. “You like that, huh?” he asked, now brushing his cock back and forth across Ian’s lips.

“Mickey, stop teasing.”

Mickey fisted Ian’s hair and started thrusting into Ian’s mouth in time with the music. It was languid and sensual, and his cock throbbed hard inside Ian’s warm mouth. Mickey wanted to cum,

his body desperate with desire. Ian was moaning loudly, while his hands roamed up and down Mickey's legs. When he got too close to his orgasm, he pulled out and turned around. Bending over, he did his version of twerking, Ian reduced to grunts and groans, slapping his ass and spreading his ass cheeks open.

"Baby, stand over my face. Come on, circle those hips and let me slip my tongue in. Mickey, I need a taste."

He backed up over Ian, leaned against the wall, spread his cheeks and lowered down onto Ian's waiting face. By making small circles with his hips, Ian's tongue would slip in and out of his hole —still open from fucking twice already. Ian could probably taste his own cum inside Mickey's ass, and the thought made Mickey tug roughly on his own cock.

He looked down to find Ian rutting into his own hand, while panting hard. "Oh Jesus, Ian, let's fuck. Fuck me. Fuck me, now."

Ian hurriedly slicked up his cock and then Mickey just sat straight down on it. Mickey loved fucking Ian in this position—sitting up, facing each other—because they could kiss and cling to each other the entire time. He started moving up and down, just small at first, as their mouths tried to eat each other. Soon Ian was helping him, gripping his hips as he lifted almost completely off and slammed back down hard. Ian was always so deep inside of him, filling him up perfectly. Mickey was so turned on, his cock almost streaming with pre-cum as his prostate was hit over and over again. Four stokes of his dick and he was gone; he threw his head back as his orgasm ripped through him, Ian damn near biting through the delicate skin of his neck, as he too climaxed with satisfied grunts.

Mickey slowed down and returned his lips to Ian's once more. Ian's cum was leaking out his thoroughly wrecked hole, and he groaned at the sensation. He couldn't explain the addiction, but Ian seeding him was something he craved. "Round three was fuckin' hot," he said, running his hands through Ian's sweaty hair.

"So fucking hot. *You're* so fucking hot. We need to nap before round four."

Mickey suddenly felt as exhausted as Ian looked. "Yeah, a little nap."

Ian shuffled down the bed so he was lying down. Mickey lifted off Ian's softening cock, but just laid down on top of Ian, resting his head on Ian's chest. Arms wrapped around him and pulled him in closer. The sound of Ian's heart pounding under his ear was comforting, and he closed his eyes. "Ian, you know you're the fastest under 20, 400m hurdler to ever walk the planet. Like ever, in the history of mankind. Do you fucking get how amazing that is?"

Mickey waited for a response, and when he received none, he registered Ian's deep breathing and smiled. He finally wore his boyfriend out. Smiling, he then pressed a kiss to Ian's chest. Mickey knew he should get up and clean them, his cum drying between their bodies. But maybe just a few more minutes laying on Ian's chest. It was so comfortable…

When their alarm woke them at 6 am, they were a filthy, stuck together mess. But it was worth it.

<u>THREE WEEKS LATER….TEXAS A & M</u>

"Hey babe, I'm gonna run back to my dorm room. I loaned Jerry two DVDs and the fucker hasn't given them back." Mickey pecked Ian on the lips and headed towards the door. "Be back in 20."

“Kay, see ya soon,” Ian replied, zipping up his suitcase.

Once Mickey was gone, Ian started checking for anything he might have forgotten.

After he arrived home from Poland, he was on a high - doing interviews, watching his Instagram followers skyrocket and celebrating with Mickey. Then he crashed - sleeping for 14 hours straight. The following few days, he and Mickey stayed inside - mostly in bed - watching old movies, eating and napping. He turned off his phone and switched off the world. They talked a lot. About what happened with Terry, about college, and their future together.

Ian had considered leaving college and going pro. There was a lot of money on offer and an opportunity to start his career with the spotlight pointed directly on him. But Mickey wanted to finish college; he wanted a backup plan in case his athletic career got cut short. And Ian understood. So the choice was between staying in college with Mickey and finishing his degree, or spending a lot of time travelling the world for competitions and being away from Mickey. Ian was already leaning toward staying in college when both his Dad and Coach Smythe weighed in, encouraging him to value his education. Mickey was willing to support his choice either way, but Ian could see the poorly veiled fear behind his boyfriend’s eyes.

Ian sat Mickey down one afternoon and confessed to how he spiralled out of control every time he went to the track—memories of *that* day still haunting him. He didn’t think he could train there every day. On top of that, the college reminded him of Coach Wells and Robinson and stupid fucking Johnson. Bottom line was, Ian wanted out of Texas A & M.

Mickey, being the perfect boyfriend, had just nodded and said, “So where are we going, Gallagher?”

They had settled on Standford. Besides being a great college - they had great coaches, it was far away from Terry, and the weather was ideal for training. An added bonus was San Francisco—they could do with a welcoming LGBT+ community nearby.

A week ago they packed up all their shit and had it sent home to Ian’s house where they were spending the rest of their summer vacation. Together. Although, they were stopping off in Chicago first, so he could meet Mandy and see his half brothers and sisters. They would be safe as Terry was behind bars awaiting a trial date.

Ian finished checking all the cupboards and drawers, then moved into the bathroom to check there too. Mickey startled him, sweeping in the room with a DVD in hand.

“That fucker Jerry lost my copy of Under Siege.”

Ian came out of the bathroom to look at his grumpy boyfriend squashing a DVD into his sports bag. “I’ll buy you a new one when we get to Chicago. You ready? Uber will be here in 15. We should head out.”

“Yeah, I’m good,” Mickey said, picking up his two bags.

They both fell silent, gazing at each other as the weight of leaving descended. Ian felt sadness roll over him. He wasn’t second guessing their decision to leave, but nonetheless they had shared a lot in this room, at this college. “Fell in love with you here.”

The corners of Mickey’s mouth turned up in a shy smile, and Ian marvelled at how he loved Mickey more and more with each passing day. Mickey walked over and kissed him softly on the cheek. “Me too. But we get to take that with us wherever we go.”

Ian smiled, “Is my boyfriend turning into a poet? That’s some seriously romantic sappy shit.”

“Shut the fuck up and turn out the lights.” Mickey bumped him playfully, his face blushing pink.

Ian flipped off the switch. “Hey,” he said, reaching out to brush his thumb across Mickey’s cheekbone. “You know that day we met at the track? I almost didn’t train that day. But I’m glad I did, because it turned out to be the best decision I’ve ever made. I love you, Mickey Milkovich.” With that, he tenderly connected their lips and then placed one to Mickey’s forehead. “Now let’s get outta here.” Opening the door for Mickey, he threw his backpack over his shoulder, grabbed his suitcase, and followed his future out the door.

Chapter End Notes

If you haven't had a chance to check out the first chapter of my new fic - "Real Estate Wars" then I would love you to give it a try!

This was the last official chapter - Chapter 12 will be the epilogue - which will be set forward in time and I cannot wait to write it and share it with you all. I am aiming for early next week. (Then chapter 2 of "REW" a bit later in the week.)

Please comment, kudos and subscribe - I would especially love to hear your thoughts on this large chapter!
Take care!
Rachael x

8 years later...Paris, 2024

Chapter Summary

The Epilogue - we join Ian and Mickey 8 years later in 2024.

A heartfelt thank you to moonlight_inn for gifting me the incredible artwork seen in this epilogue! I am truly touched and humbled to receive something so meaningful! The artwork was created by @darthvaders-wife (Tumblr) and it is absolutely brilliant!!

Chapter Notes

An enormous thank you to all the readers who followed along as this work progressed! Thank you for the comments, the kudos and for supporting my fics - it means a great deal to me!
I truly hope you enjoy this epilogue - writing epilogues has become one of my favourite aspects of writing a multi-chapter fic, as I always want to know more about their future lives together.
So it is with some sadness, that I let this version of them go - I will miss track and field Ian and Mickey.
Let the romance begin...

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ian completed his warmup, pulled off his spikes and headed toward Mickey and Coach Smythe. Today was the day. The day he had the chance to achieve his childhood dreams. He was 27, in the best shape of his life, and he had Mickey to thank for it. It was the Olympics in Paris, and in just 40 minutes he would race for gold. Once again, like so many years ago when he was a junior athlete, he had the potential to set a new world record.

Both he and Mickey had gone pro after graduating from Stanford in 2019, then COVID struck and everything turned to shit. Competitions got cancelled, travelling was hard, and they moved the Olympics from 2020 to 2021. Ian somehow managed selection for the US team but performed poorly—only making it to the semi-final. It was a kick in the guts, and it wounded his pride.

But Mickey had it worse - sustaining a shoulder injury shortly before the Olympic trials, leaving him with no chance of selection. It was a tough couple of years, and they fought a lot.

Things started looking up in 2022, when they both competed at the World Champs, and Ian, despite the odds, became World Champ. It wasn't like he deserved it though; the top two ranked athletes were both out that year with injuries and then the next best hurdler false started in the final giving Ian the opportunity to take the win. The simple fact was that his development had stagnated, having not PB'd in almost two years. He needed something to change or he would never achieve his dream.

That change happened when Mickey decided he wanted to retire. Mickey had placed 11th in the World Champs that year, but his shoulder injury continued to plague him. Ian cried more about it than Mickey did until his boyfriend told him to get his shit together. Then Mickey ran an idea by him, and Ian listened.

When they'd been on lockdown during the pandemic, Ian had spent most of his time sulking and whining, while Mickey had studied strength training. Mickey had become increasingly interested in the importance of a strength and conditioning coach separate to the event coach and believed Ian's plateau was due to a lack of hurdle specific strength and not a lack of speed or skill. So, in late 2022, Mickey officially became his strength and conditioning coach.

Three months later, Ian saw results on the track. His partner was a fucking genius. Mickey and Coach Smythe worked well together, co-ordinating his training schedule, and Ian also asked Mickey to become his manager too. For some couples, living and working together would be the death of the relationship, but for them, it brought them closer. At first, Ian worried Mickey was disappointed about losing his athletic career, but he'd never seen Mickey happier. Ian had to remind himself that it was Ian's dream to win the Olympics, Mickey had only ever seen athletics as a pathway to a better life—and a better life they unequivocally had.

Once Ian had his sweats and trainers back on, he picked up his bag, ready to head toward the call room. Coach Smythe gave him some final words of advice, wished him luck, and headed off to make his way into the stadium. That left him and Mickey gazing into each other's eyes as the weight of the moment sank in. Some days Ian hated leaving Mickey to go into the call room, and today was one of them. Even though he had his nerves under control, he still wanted Mickey close. After almost nine years together, and everything they had been through, their bond was unbreakable.

"You're so nervous, babe," he said, reaching out and cupping Mickey's jaw.

"Doing that bad a job at hiding it, am I?"

Ian chuckled, "The fucking worst. I feel good, feel ready. With a bit of luck on my side, I think I got this. I gotta get into the call room, but at least you can fall apart once I'm gone." Ian kissed Mickey, tender and sweet. "I love you so much. I'm hurdling for you tonight, baby. All for you." Mickey was tearing up, so Ian pulled him into a hug, letting him nuzzle into his neck.

"Love you so fucking much too. Want this for you. You deserve it. Good luck, babe. I'll be waiting at the finish line like always."

They kissed again, a few gentle pecks, then Ian peeled himself away and headed toward the call room entrance. At the last minute, he turned back, Mickey still watching him, blowing him a kiss. A smile erupted across his face and he blew one back. The next time he laid eyes on Mickey, he would either be an Olympic Champion, or he wouldn't. It was unlikely he'd be back in 2028 - this was his peak, his moment for the taking.

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Once Ian was inside the call room, Mickey physically deflated from working so hard at keeping it together during the warmup. The adrenaline flooded his body, his stomach bound itself in knots and his legs dissolved into jelly. At any big events, Mickey tried to cover his nerves—not wanting to make Ian nervous or project feelings of insecurity about Ian's capabilities. Because it was *never* about doubting Ian's talent. No, it was about Mickey caring so much about Ian's happiness. He

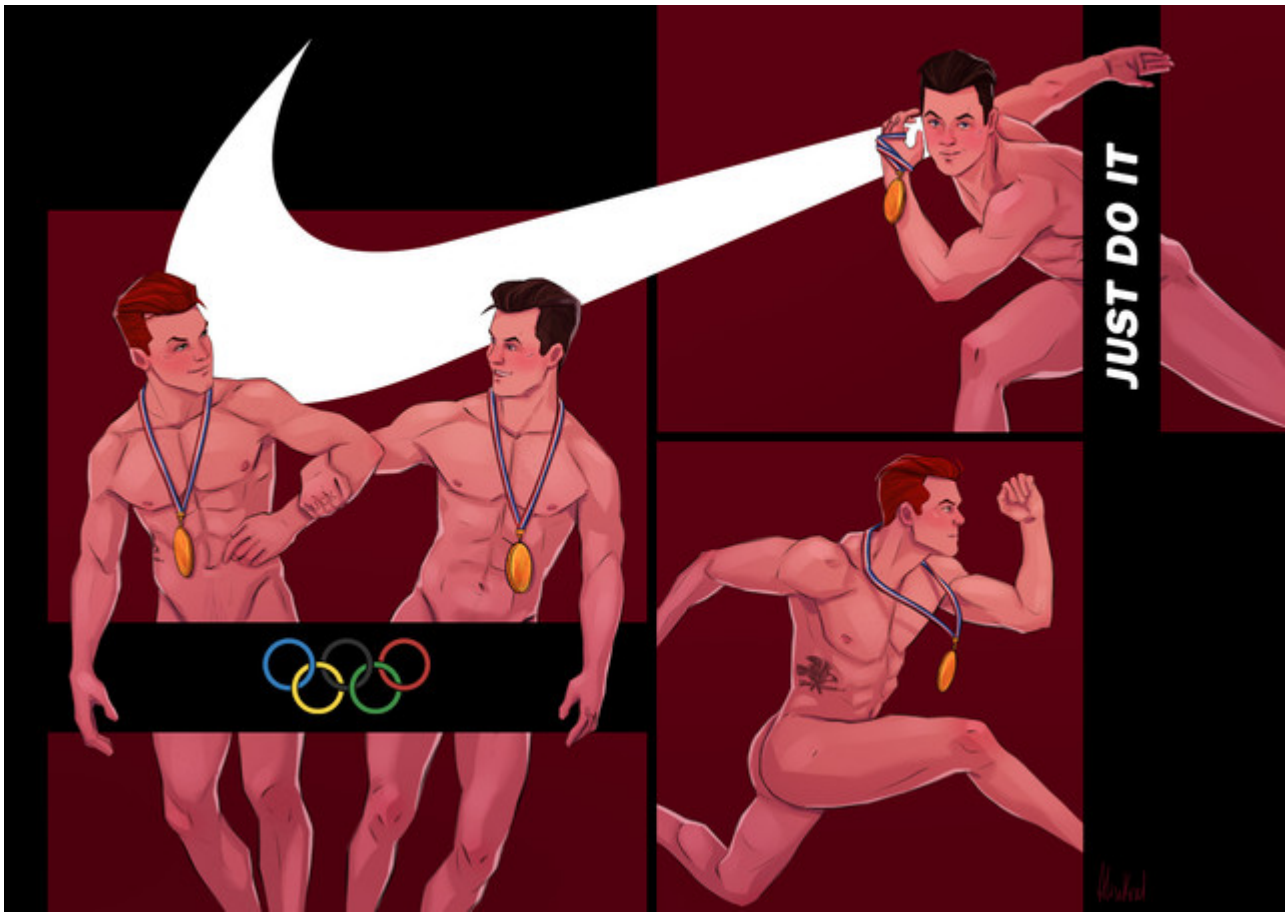
wanted to give Ian the fucking world, and it pissed him off he couldn't. Whenever Ian was out on the track competing, Mickey had no control, and that's what made him anxious.

He didn't have all that much time, so he hurried out of the athlete area and made his way toward the stadium entrance. Ian didn't know, but Mickey had dropped a small fortune on a ticket near the finish line in the third row. There was no limit to the thousands he would pay to ensure he didn't break their race ritual. Over the years he had added a shit load of others, including wearing the same underwear and a dog tag necklace that was engraved with their initials and the day they met. Yes, Mickey had mellowed, and become a sentimental—and superstitious - bitch over the last nine years. Living with a sappy redhead had that effect.

Mickey was the happiest he'd ever been in his life. He'd enjoyed his time as a pro athlete, but being a strength and conditioning coach, and managing Ian's career gave him a genuine sense of purpose and accomplishment. There was no doubt that after Ian retired, he would coach other pro athletes.

A couple of years ago he and Ian had set up a non-profit organisation to sponsor queer youth track and field athletes. It was his baby, and he loved every minute. Twice a year they held track and field training camps where they coached and mentored kids from all over the country. After Terry died in prison in 2021, he needed a way to forgive his Dad and move forward. He knew it sounded stupid. Why should he forgive his Dad? But he needed to, to be free. Their organisation provided a way for him to give back, to be there for kids who were just like him. And in the process, he finally made peace with the past.

When they had gone pro, Nike had been true to their word and sponsored them both. They become a very visible gay couple and with that came responsibility. Nike had risen to the occasion, their 'couple' marketing campaign really pushing the boundaries. The ads were sexy as fuck and didn't reduce them to being that 'cute asexual gay couple.' The campaign caused a shit load of controversary, but also contributed to the slow breaking down of stereotypes and pre-conceived notions about gay men, masculinity, and sport. To this day they still had an enormous copy of the print ad hanging on their living room wall in San Francisco.



Mickey located his seat; he wasn't far from Coach Smythe, who was seated with his wife a few rows back, and somewhere else in the stadium was Clayton and Lucy. Once he settled, a few people in the crowd recognised him, and he did his best not to be rude. He was just too fucking nervous for small talk. Thankfully, a few minutes later the hurdlers were brought out onto the track, and he could focus all his energy on Ian.

The closer they got to starting, the sicker Mickey felt; he was bouncing his knee up and down and had to sip on his water bottle to stop himself from throwing up. Ian looked focussed and fired up—the perfect combination. As the athletes were announced, he brought the dog tag to his mouth and pressed his lips to it, it was the closest he could get to kissing Ian. 'You got this baby' he recited over and over in his head as they took their places in the blocks. The energy in the stadium was phenomenal and he could feel his heart pumping erratically as 100,000 people simultaneously fell silent. He almost couldn't watch; it was that terrifying.

The electronic gun rang out across the stadium and he held his breath as Ian shot out of the blocks like a fucking bullet. The worst part of 400 hurdles was the length of the race—you couldn't even begin to accurately predict the outcome until the 300m mark. So Mickey just focussed on the technical aspects; keeping track of Ian's steps between hurdles, gauging how quickly he was passing athletes in the outside lanes, and looking at Ian's breathing patterns to see if his body was under stress. Because if Ian's conditioning failed him, then that was firmly on Mickey's shoulders.

As Ian came around the final bend and began his run down the front straight, Mickey wanted to stand up and cheer and scream. He couldn't take much more pressure. Ian was clear in front with 40 metres to go, and Mickey thought he was going to fucking die! It was almost worse because it seemed too easy, so he began praying that Ian would clear the last hurdle without stumbling. When he did, Mickey chanced taking his eyes off Ian to look at the timer. Holy fucking Jesus Christ, it was maybe going to happen. Mickey stood up—even though that was unacceptable at track and field—and he started screaming. He couldn't even tell you what he was saying.

Ian threw himself across the finish line, stumbling and almost falling. Mickey was shaking like a motherfucker and already moving out to the aisle. The times came up, followed by the announcer calling the new world record. Mickey was crying like a baby as he made his way down to the front. The security guards would never let him over, but he knew Ian would come to him, seek him out.

Before he knew it, Ian was thrown a U. S flag and was holding it up as he ran over to him. There were cameramen following, and Ian was there on the big screens, and Mickey just wanted to get his hands on his partner. And then Ian was there and leaning over the fence and holding them both tight inside the US flag. They didn't have words, so they just held each other, and Ian's tears were on his neck as he buried his face. When Ian pulled away, they finally kissed.

"Mickey… Mickey, I have something to do." Ian wrapped the flag around Mickey's shoulders and then knelt down on one knee in front of him—slipping a ring he'd never seen before off his finger. The camera was in their faces and he realised the entire stadium was catching on and falling silent again.

"Mickey Milkovich, I've wanted to do this for a long time, but a part of me was always scared you'd say no. But I came to realise there was something I wanted so much more than Olympic gold and that was to spend the rest of my life with you. Baby, will you do me the greatest honour and be my husband? Mickey, will you marry me?"

Mickey had tears running down his face and he knew his chin was wobbling too. Ian's face was full of hope along with a pinch of fear, and Mickey couldn't understand why because he would never leave Ian, not fucking ever, marriage certificate or not. Ian had always been his forever. Ian lifted the ring up toward him and bit down on his bottom lip.

"Yes! Of course, I'll marry you," he said, his voice breaking with emotion. Ian stood, that 1000-watt smile on his face, and nearly kissed him off his feet—all with a fence between them. The crowd erupted into cheers and whistles, and he wanted to get out of the stadium and let his fiancé do the most filthy *and* romantic things to him. As Ian slipped the ring on his finger, Mickey whispered, "Did you actually fuckin' plan to do this? What if you didn't win?"

Ian broke out into a laugh. "Well, I knew I *had* to win, just so I could propose to you in front of millions of people. So everyone would know how much Ian Gallagher loves Mickey Milkovich."

"Fuck…" was all Mickey could say. He had no words.

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Ian had arranged with U. S team management to spend the night away from the athlete village - and it had been a battle to get it approved. When they entered Mickey's hotel room, it was just after midnight. Ian had done so much press, and then the medal presentation—which was the most incredible experience of his athletic career - and now he just needed this night with his fiancé before the endless weeks of media commitments began.

He knew the story was all over social media and the news, but he meant what he said to Mickey—while winning the Olympics *was* a dream come true—Mickey would *always* be more important. And fuck it if he was going to let all the straights have the most romantic proposals in history.

"C'mere," he said, pulling Mickey into a slow, deep kiss. They were tired out, but he was going to make love to Mickey if it was the last thing he did. "Are you happy?" His eyes searched Mickey's

face, needing reassurance.

Mickey reached up and cupped his face in both hands. “Yeah. I didn’t know how much I wanted this until you proposed.” Mickey was looking at him like he was the sun. “Let’s go slow tonight, fiancé.”

This was Mickey at his most open, most vulnerable, and even Ian wasn’t privy to it all that often. He pulled Mickey’s shirt over his head, then caressed his chest and shoulders. Mickey grew more beautiful with each passing day, the boy he met in college now replaced with a mature man—he was stronger, broader, and carried himself with an air of authority - and Ian still couldn’t get enough of him. Bending down, Ian helped Mickey out of his shoes and socks and then slid down his pants and boxers. It felt different between them now; it was *more* than before, and he breathed heavily under the weight of it.

Mickey then carefully, tenderly, shed Ian’s clothes from his body, until they were facing each other naked. They touched and stroked, as if seeing each other naked for the first time. Ian was on the brink of tears again. “You’re so beautiful, Mick,” he whispered, eyes roaming over his fiancé’s body and back up to his face.

“I was just thinking the same about you.”

They smiled at each other. Mickey retrieved the medal from the coffee table where he had placed it and put it back around his neck. It was so much heavier than he expected. Over the years it had become a tradition to wear their medals when they fucked post wins, and today was no exception. Ian took Mickey’s hand and led him over to the bed, pulling back the blankets, before sitting on the edge. Mickey sank down onto his lap, satisfied hums falling from their mouths as their hands wrapped around each other, bodies pulling flush.

They were both half-hard already, that skin on skin contact igniting a fire between them, mouths coming together in a well-practiced dance. Ian slid his hands down to his fiancé’s ass, squeezing tight and pulling him closer so he could feel Mickey’s cock trapped between their bodies. Mickey starting rocking in his lap, causing a moan to escape from his mouth and vibrate against Mickey’s lips. He could kiss Mickey forever, and this slow, languid, wet tongue fucking they were giving each other was pure, mind-blowing bliss.

Soon, the desire to immerse their bodies in each other won out. Mickey insisted Ian lay back and relax, as his fiancé licked and kissed up and down his body before slicking his cock with lube. Mickey pressed lube into himself and straddled Ian’s hips, sinking down slowly, taking Ian’s cock deep inside. There were few words spoken as Mickey rode him with a sensual roll of his hips. Everything they needed to say could be conveyed through the love and longing in their eyes.

Mickey’s hands fell to his chest, over his gold medal, as they increased the speed, Ian unable to stop his hips driving up into his fiancé. Ian panted with want and desire, the sight of Mickey’s mouth hanging open with unbridled pleasure a visual feast. Their sex life had never waned, although it had matured. They still fucked with youthful abandonment, indulging their filthy kinks, but they made love more and more often. And Ian loved it. It grounded him, centred him. Mickey’s steadfast love had cured him of his feelings of unworthiness, of being unwanted. He could only hope his love for Mickey had healed the rejection and abuse that had dominated his childhood. Because Ian loved Mickey for all that he was, and he intended to love and protect him until he took his last breath on earth.

Feeling overcome with emotion, he surged up, his arms capturing Mickey with a fierceness that surprised them both, the kiss layered with meaning. And Mickey understood, as he always did - opening up to him, accepting him, seeing him bare and raw. When he pulled back, he removed the

medal from his neck and placed it over Mickey's head. "This is as much mine as it is yours—if you hadn't taken over as my strength and conditioning coach, I would never have achieved this. I owe you everything, Mickey Milkovich."

Mickey studied his face, one hand stroking his neck. Ian knew Mickey rejected this notion as much as it meant everything for Ian to say it. Mickey also knew that Ian meant every word. Mickey leaned forward and kissed him, and he knew it was the only reply he would receive, and he needed nothing more, because he understood Mickey better than he understood himself. Picking Mickey up, he flipped them over so Mickey was beneath him and began thrusting long and deep. They held out as long as they could, declarations of love whispered into each other's mouths as their bodies built to a crescendo. Ian's skin was slick with sweat as he fought his tired muscles, wanting only to give Mickey the orgasm he deserved.

"Fuck, Ian, oh baby, cumming."

Ian groaned his approval, stroking his fiancé's cock faster as he thrust erratically inside him. The moment Mickey cried out, arching his back with the euphoria of his release, Ian let go too, shuddering almost violently with the strength of his orgasm. When he had control of his body again, he brought their lips together, like he was sealing the deal. Mickey was his; his fiancé, and soon to be husband. And he really liked the sound of that.

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Mickey was laughing his tits off, as he tried to clean his cum off the Olympic gold medal.

"You better do a good job, Mick. I gotta wear that at all my media commitments."

Ian had already cleaned up and was back in bed.

"Well, it's nice to know a piece of me will be with you," he said, raising his eyebrows and trying not to laugh again.

Ian gave in and burst out laughing. "You're a fucking dick."

"Yeah, but I'm your fuckin' dick and you love me anyway."

"I do. Come on, leave it, and come back to bed. It's nearly 2 am and I've got that breakfast interview at 7am."

Mickey set the medal down on the nightstand and climbed into bed, settling in Ian's waiting arms. "Does it feel real?"

"Yes and no. The weirdest part is realising you've spent almost two decades trying to achieve something and now you've done it. So, it's like, what next? What will tomorrow look like? Feel like? Will I still have the same fucking drive when I'm training? Plus, no one ever breaks their own world record. Shit, Mickey, maybe I'm about to have an existential crisis."

"Hey hey babe. It's 2 am in the morning, you've just achieved the impossible and it's a lot to process. Try to enjoy it. You deserve that. Kay? So fuckin' proud of you. And happy for you."

"I love you so much, Mick. Honestly, I just want to focus on our engagement and planning our wedding. Do you like the ring?"

Mickey looked at his hand, admiring the ring—a black tungsten ring with inlaid diamonds. "Fuckin' love it. Was thinking I'd like to buy you an engagement ring too."

"Yeah?" Ian asked, nibbling at his neck.

"Yeah, would you like that?"

"I like everything you do for me." Ian's hand was moving down to his ass.

"Don't start again, you horny bitch. You need some sleep."

"What? I get a ring on your finger and suddenly you're not putting out anymore?"

They both giggled at each other, lips gravitating like magnets as they kissed for a few seconds.

Mickey was deliriously happy; his stupid hot ginger had wanted the entire world to know how much he loved him. He knew Ian had proposed that way to show how proud he was of their love—it still tied back to their college days when they were trying to hide it—and to show Mickey that he was priority number one, even more important than winning the fucking Olympics. Also, his fiancé could be a show-off, and Mickey was okay with that.

"So long or short engagement?" he asked, reaching over to turn out the light on the nightstand.

"Not too long, can't wait to call you my husband. But long enough to have a classy, but intimate wedding. Is that what you were thinking?"

They settled down for sleep, Mickey turning over so Ian could spoon him. "Sounds good. Don't want a giant fuckin' wedding, but I want a nice one. Got some ideas about the flowers and how I want the venue decorated."

Mickey felt Ian still behind him. "Oh you do, do you? Is my fiancé going to turn into groomzilla or something?"

"Shut the fuck up. Just want it to be perfect."

They remained silent for a while, and Mickey could tell Ian was winding down, ready for sleep. There was something on the tip of his tongue that he wanted to say, but he was nervous. Squeezing Ian's hand, he finally got up the courage. "Ian, I think I want a kid."

Before he could react, Ian had him on his back and hovering over him. Even in the darkened room, Mickey could see Ian's eyes wide with excitement. "Are you serious?"

"Yeah. What do ya think?" he asked.

"Yes. Yes, a thousand times over. I didn't think you'd want one."

"Didn't think so either. But it's been on my mind the last year. Wouldn't mind a couple of kids."

"I didn't think this day could get any better. Maybe I'll retire soon and be a full-time Dad and me and the kids can follow you around the world while you train athletes."

"Could think of a worse life," he said.

"I don't think I can think of anything better. I love you, soon to be Mr. Gallagher."

Mickey frowned, "And who the fuck decided I was changing my name?"

“Oh please, you know you are, bitch. Now kiss me, then turn over so I can spoon your juicy ass.”

Mickey kissed him—of course—and then they settled back into position again. Hell yeah, he was going to change his name, but he was still going to give Ian a hard time about it. Shit, they were getting married. Maybe starting a family soon, too. He kissed Ian’s hand and tried to stop himself from smiling like a doofus.

Thank God he dragged himself to the college track that hot Sunday so many years ago and made that cocky ginger chase his ass. Little did he know that would be his future husband and father of his kids. The one thing he never had when he was growing up was hope. But since meeting Ian, his life had been filled with it every single day. And love. Ian showed him love – how to give and receive it and share and cherish it. “You know how much I love you, don’t you?” he barely whispered, not sure if Ian had already fallen asleep.

“I do, babe. You show me every day and I feel the same way.”

Mickey tilted his head back, stealing one more kiss before falling asleep in his fiancé’s loving embrace.

Chapter End Notes

Please leave me a final comment - it will put a smile on my face!!!

If you haven't had time thus far, please check out my new fic - "Real Estate Wars" - I'm working on chapter two and hope to have it up between Wednesday and Friday.

Take care!!
Rachael x
Twitter @dancelovermk

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!